

"HAEC EST ILLA MEIS MULTUM CANTATA LIBELLIS"

An Investigation of Female Personae
in the
Epigrams of Martial

by

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in conformity with the requirements of
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Spero me secutum in libellis meis tale temperamentum ut de illis queri non possit quisquis de se bene senserit, cum salva infimarum quoque personarum reverentia ludant; quae adeo antiquis auctoribus defuit ut nominibus non tantum veris abusi sint sed et magnis. Mihi fama vilis constet et probetur in me novissimum ingenium. Absit a iocorum nostrorum simplicitate malignus interpretes nec epigrammata mea scribat: inprobe facit qui in alieno libro ingeniosus est. Lascivam verborum veritatem, id est epigrammaton linguam, excussarem, si meum esset exemplum: sic scribit Catullus, sic Marsus, sic Pedo, sic Gaetulicus sic quicumque perlegitur. Si quis tamen tam ambitiose tristis est ut apud illum in nulla pagina Latine loqui fas sit, potest epistola vel potius titulo contentus esse. Epigrammata illis scribuntur qui solent spectare Florales. Non intret Cato theatrum meum, aut si intraverit, spectet. Videor mihi meo iure facturum si epistolam versibus clusero:

Nosses iocosae dulce cum sacrum Florae
festosque lusus et licentiam volgi,
cur in theatrum, Cato servere, venisti
an ideo tantum veneras, ut exires?¹

I hope that I have followed in my little books such moderation that no one who feels good about himself can complain about them, since they play on the unscathed respect of lowly people too, which was so missing from ancient authors that they maltreated the names not only of regular people, but even of great people. May fame come to me at a lower cost and may the final thing to be demonstrated in me be my cleverness. May the malicious interpreter be missing from the frankness of my jests, and may no one write my epigrams: he who is talented in another book, shamelessly re-writes [my verse]. May I be excused for the genuine licentiousness of my words – that is the language of epigram – if mine is the example: so writes Catullus, so Marsus, so Pedo, so Gaetulicus, so anyone who is well-read. Nevertheless, if there is some man who is so ostentatiously upset that on no Latin page is one allowed to speak at his house, then he can content himself with the introductory note or rather with the title. Epigrams are written for those who are used to watching the Floralian games. Let Cato not enter my theatre, or, if he does, let him pay attention. It seems to me safe if I now close my introduction with these lines:

You knew the delightful rite of the humorous Floralia,
The festive games and the cheeky crowd,
Why have you, stern Cato, come into the theatre?
Had you come in just so that you could go out?

¹ Mart. 1.pref. My own translation follows; subsequent translations are from D.R. Shackleton Bailey in the Loeb Classical Library: Martial: Epigrams, London: Harvard University Press (ed. and transl. D.R. Shackleton Bailey, 1993).

ABSTRACT

Much research and work has been done on both Martial and his epigrams. Most dated scholarship has tended to provide unduly narrow perspectives, neglecting much of Martial's art, and focussing instead on his "immoral" character, and "obscene" verse. Still, a great deal of progress has been made in recent decades in understanding the poet and his verse.

There has, however, been little investigation of the *personae* in his epigrams -- less still of the female *personae*, who appear in roughly twenty percent of Martial's 1600 epigrams. We should look now at the individual epigrams and notice what types of women appear, how often they appear, and in what capacity. (What are they doing? Do certain types share certain traits or representations? Are some always praised and others always frowned upon?) This can only be done by a detailed analysis of Martial's text.

The intent of this thesis is to explore objectively the female *personae* appearing throughout the fourteen books of Martial's epigrams. The end result will be a clearer understanding of the female-oriented poems, and of the female *personae* within those poems. The reader of Martial might then know what to expect, and what to find when embarking upon an examination of his leading ladies.

Other objectives include clearing away past moralizing, and opening up other possible lines of investigation -- into Martial, his epigrams, his male and female *personae*, as well as into other contemporary writers and their works.

I have begun by providing introductory tables and observations. The first table shows -- book by book -- the distribution of female-oriented poems. As well as listing the individual epigrams on women, it separates the poems that focus on the woman

from those that mention her in passing. The second table reveals the different female types that appear. It groups together and lists all the poems – from all the books – that pertain to a certain type.

Even though tables and statistics reveal when and how often certain types of women appear, they tell nothing of the meaning of such appearances; that is, there is no context. In the chapters following, then, I have placed these personae in context, and attempted to find patterns among Martial's various representations of similar types of women. Everything is gathered together and summed up in a concluding chapter. Here, too, there are some ideas for further investigation, research, and writing.

GRATIAE

I should like to express my most sincere appreciation to Professors R.S. Kilpatrick and A.J. Marshall, both of whom supervised this thesis. Each one has provided endless patience, support, guidance, and inspiration. Despite countless telephone conversations, faxes sent, and ever-changing thesis-drafts, they retained a sense of humour and realistic perspective. Thank you.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations appear in the footnotes and bibliography:

AJAH	American Journal of Ancient History
AJP	American Journal of Philology
CB	Classical Bulletin
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
CJ	Classical Journal
CPh	Classical Philology
CQ	Classical Quarterly
CSCA	California Studies in Classical Antiquity
CV = ECM	Classical Views = Echos du Monde Classique
CW	Classical World
HSCP	Harvard Studies in Classical Philology
ICS	Illinois Classical Studies
LCM	Liverpool Classical Monthly
OUP	Oxford University Press
P&P	Past and Present
PCPhS	Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society
Pop.Studies	Population Studies
RPh	Revue de Philologie
TAPA	The American Philological Association
YJC	Yale Journal of Criticism

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

My interest in the female personae in Martial's epigrams arose from an initial interest in, or rather reaction to, the countless yet astonishingly varied views and opinions of scholars about the Roman woman in general. For instance, while examining the greater independence which Roman women (possibly) came to experience, Jerome Carcopino contends that from the evidence available, we must surmise that such freedom "frequently degenerated into license, and that the looseness of [women's] morals tended to dissolve family ties";¹ Blüher states that the free woman was "a natural phenomena [sic]" who "[found] her womanhood a problem"; Kieffer writes: "The average woman at that time in Rome saw new and unprecedented possibilities of satisfying her innate vanity, ambition and sensuality".² Such opinions might shock the modern scholar since they are, it appears, narrow-minded and biased.³ Yet many modern critics seem to do little to rectify the inaccuracy; instead they often aim simply at criticizing such dated views.

¹ Jerome Carcopino, Daily Life in Ancient Rome: The People and the City at the Height of the Empire, New Haven: Yale University Press (1940) 93.

² For Blüher, cf. Kieffer, 58; and Otto Kieffer, Sexual Life in Ancient Rome, New York: Barnes and Noble Inc. (transl. Gilbert and Helen Highet, 1951) 43. It ought to be noted here that, while much of his work is invaluable, Kieffer is not always a respectable source; he is more of a critical mess. See especially his observations on pages 3 ("[The Roman man's] whole thought must have been as primitive as his life. All theoretical activities -- art, science, philosophy -- were beyond his reach"); 57 ("Is it really possible to single out a higher and lower class among [Roman women]? It is doubtful. But always and everywhere the finer type of men and women are in the minority: there are so few really sensitive people"); and also on 43 ("When an entire economic epoch is breaking up, it is impossible for women not to change their nature and outlook; especially since new wealth and opportunities have a more powerful effect on the spirit of women than on men").

³ To me, it seems that Blüher found the free woman's womanhood a problem, or Carcopino saw a woman's freedom as leading to her moral laxity.

Tina Passman, for example, calls older scholarship "patriarchal scholarship" and deems it "pseudo-search"; her "intent" is to "[cast] down the barriers that internalized heteropatriarchal assumptions have erected to divide us." But does not such a statement serve only to emphasize and strengthen such "barriers"?⁴

The problem was that as I was reading and then observing certain fallibilities of past scholarship, I was doing nothing to help locate a more detailed or accurate picture of the Roman woman. Certainly, past work on Roman women must not be disregarded, despite any inconsistencies or inaccuracies, since the value of the scholars' insight and research is incalculable. But since there are so many opinions on this topic -- which itself seemed too vast to tackle within this essay -- I thought a narrower focal point was needed. I needed to find a writer, be he⁵ poet, historian, philosopher, or whatever, about whose art and character opinions varied, and a genre wherein the woman appeared, but never in a limited capacity (no expectations regarding her role, behaviour, character, looks, actions, and so on).⁶ Martial's epigrams suited my needs best. Within this introduction, we see many different views on his character and art; later, through tables and content analysis, we observe the numerous types of female personae appearing in the

⁴ T. Passman, "Out of the Closet and into the Field: Matriculture, the Lesbian Perspective and Feminist Classics," Feminist Theory and the Classics, London: Routledge (ed.s N.S. Rabinowitz and A. Richlin, 1993) 188 & 201. It would be apt to mention Peter Emberley's Zero Tolerance: Hot Button Politics in Canada's Universities (Toronto: Penguin Books, 1996) here, since he discusses and examines radical language and opinions where "the attitude is 'if you're not with us, you're against us', and anyone who opposes equality or inclusivity, as they conceive them, is denounced" (204-5).

⁵ Not "she" since the vast majority of extant Latin text is male-authored.

⁶ Varied opinions were an important pre-requisite because I did not want to enter into this narrower realm having a restricted view of the author and his work. The unlimited appearances of women were also an essential not simply for interest's sake, but also since to write about one sort does not allow for the comparison and contrast necessary for more general observations and broader applications.

epigrams.

Martial -- Marcus Valerius Martialis -- was born at Augusta Bilbilis in Hispania around 40 A.D. He arrived in Rome in the reign of Nero shortly after the conspiracy of Piso, in 65 A.D. By 80 A.D. he was starting to gain wider recognition as a poet with his Liber Spectaculorum, and later his Xenia and Apophereta. He subsequently gained the honours and rights of a Roman knight, and published fourteen books of epigrams.

Unfortunately there is no major evidence outside Martial's own text for his biography. Although we cannot trust that Martial is always telling the truth,⁷ we might suppose that details on his background are truthful (although invaluable today, they would probably be minor to him). Some good secondary sources, in terms of insights and information provided, on Martial from over the years include P.A. Howell, A Commentary on Book One of the Epigrams of Martial (London: The Athlone Press, 1980); K.W.D. Hull, Martial and His Times (London: G. Bell & Sons Ltd., 1967); J.W. Mackail, Latin Literature (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1899); P. Nixon, Martial and the Modern Epigram (New York: Longman's Green & Co., 1927); and J.P. Sullivan, Martial: The Unexpected Classic

⁷ We cannot trust that Martial is always providing accurate information, because we cannot read his mind and so access his original intentions. Interesting articles on the possible discrepancy between the author's original intent/meaning and what the reader thinks it is include Trinh T. Minh-ha. "Outside In Inside Out," Questions of Third Cinema, London: BFI Publishing (ed.s J. Pines & P. Willemen, 1989) 133-149; J.G. Henderson, "Not "Women in Satire" but...When Satire Writes "Woman";" Satire and Society in Ancient Rome, Exeter: Exeter University Publishing (ed. S.H. Braund, 1989) 89-126; J.G. Henderson, "Satire writes <<Women>> Gendersong," PCPhS XXXV (1989) 50-80; U. Eco, The Limits of Interpretation, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), ch.s 1 & 2. Recall also Lucretius' observation from the first century B.C.: "nam nil aegrius quam res secernere apertas / ab dubiis, animus quas ab se protinus addit" = "There is nothing harder than to separate the facts as revealed from the questionable interpretations promptly imposed on them by the mind" (De Rerum Natura, IV.467-468; translation from R.E. Latham, Lucretius: On the Nature of the Universe, London: Penguin Books (1951).

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

Martial's art lay in the writing of epigrams. He was a prolific composer, of some 1600 epigrams in total. But what was or is an epigram? The term "epigram" (epigramma) was initially used of an epitaph, an inscription on statues, a compliment, love poem, philosophical reflection, or sometimes of a poem on a new and unconventional thought or circumstance.⁸ It was created and named by the Greeks; but when it passed into Roman hands -- and eventually into Martial's hands -- the nature of the epigram developed: Roman epigrammatists began to stress the satiric over the poetic quality. Nowadays, the epigram continues to be known for its specifically Roman features: it is concise, satiric, and ends with a pointed sting or twist of thought. What is, and always has been, particular about the satiric epigram is that the preamble and the final sting work together to provide the desired effect. William Walsh illustrates:

An epigram should be -- if right --
Short, simple, pointed, keen and bright,
A lively little thing!

Like a wasp with taper body -- bound
By lines -- not many, neat and round,
All ending in a sting.

Coleridge writes:

What is an epigram? A dwarfish whole
Its body brevity, and wit its soul.⁹

⁸ On the epigram and Martial's use of it, see Nixon 13, 29, 194; see also J.W. Duff, Roman Satire, Berkeley: University of California Press (1936) 127.

⁹ See Nixon 5-6

Since the time of Martial, this standard, even ideal, style of the stinging epigram has been copied and adapted by epigrammatists for hundreds of years. The stinging epigram is where Martial "showed his mastery."¹⁰

Opinions concerning Martial, his art, and his character change significantly, especially over time. A critic from the nineteenth and very early twentieth centuries will, for the most part, reject the poet's wish from the preface to Book I (see frontispiece), and so not only interpret his text negatively, but even attack his own character. Such was the sentiment of The Reverend James Davies in his article "Epigrams" (The Quarterly Review CXVII 1865 104-125). Davies described Martial's work as "coarse" and "nauseating" (107-110.). See also Mackail, who in 1899 stated that Martial was "by no means a poet of the first rank, hardly perhaps a poet at all" (192).

On the other hand, a scholar from early to mid twentieth century might praise Martial and his work, even declare him, as Nixon did in 1927, "the greatest epigrammatist who ever lived" (32). Nixon also stated that Martial was "sane, well-balanced, [and] tolerant," with many positive "virtues" such as courage, self-confidence, optimism, and serenity. See also Kirby Flower Smith's Martial, The Epigrammatist and Other Essays (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1920); Smith believes not only that Martial was undeservedly "bitterly assailed" (13), but also that he had "no vices" (20).

More modern and radically feminist commentaries (re)turn to (earlier) assertions that Martial was a misogynist¹¹ whose material was offensive and

¹⁰ Duff 127; see also Nixon 13

¹¹ Along with misogyny, other value-judgements that appear in critiques on Martial include misogamy, obscenity, sexism, prejudice, and anti-feminism. These terms all have

unfair. So wrote John Sullivan in his article "Martial's <<Witty Conceits>>: some Technical Observations" (ICS XIV 1989 185). W.S. Anderson (in "Lascivia and Ira: Martial and Juvenal," CSCA III 1970) claims that in Martial's poems "morality is ostensibly irrelevant," and that "Martial himself was an unlovely character" (33). See also Carol Merriam's article "The Other Sulpicia" (CW LXXXIV 1990-91 303-304) which seems to suggest that Martial was "morally unacceptable"; and, again, John Sullivan, this time in his article "Martial" (Ramus XVI 1987 177).

The end result, after lengthy examination of critiques, is that we do not know what Martial himself was really like or how he really felt, nor how contemporary Roman society judged his epigrams.¹²

Concerning Martial's art alone, numerous views continue to appear -- particularly concerning the extent of "obscenity" in his epigrams.¹³ In 1865, Davies

modern values, judgments or ideas (most of which are negative) associated with them, so can we, in good faith, apply them to an author -- or to the society in which the author belongs -- who had no recognition either of the terms or of the conditions which they describe? As soon as we mix modern values with ancient texts, we lose sight of critical coherency. Mason rightly advises: "It is a deplorable lapse in critical manner to attribute 'hostility' or 'prejudice'...to those who place the main accent in a place different than that which seems the only right place to ourselves" ("Is Juvenal a Classic? An Introductory Essay," Arion I (1962) 8-44). A discussion of value terms in, and judgements on, Martial is an investigation I would like to pursue in the future.

¹² Of course, not all Roman society read his epigrams. Of those who did read them, not all wrote an appraisal. And of those who did appraise his works, not all comments remain extant. For these reasons, we cannot gauge with certainty how Martial's epigrams were actually received. His formal success, however, (the knighthood and receipt of the "Right of Three Children") indicates that he was in demand and was not disgraced as Ovid was.

¹³The topic of "obscenity" in Martial is vast and interesting. It is a value-judgement, so its meaning changes for each interpreter. Also, we should note that many earlier editions of Martial's text either excluded the more "obscene" epigrams, or included them only in the appendices. If the more risqué verses were included, they were either left in Latin, or were translated into Italian; this is curious since English certainly has the words for more racy terms. It may be because many smaller Latin/English dictionaries for schools exclude terms such as futuo, mentulus, cunnus, and the like. At any rate, I suspect that, when asked how they would classify Martial's epigrams, most scholars who have dabbled in a little in his works would say they are "obscene".

wrote that, in Martial, "the license...[had] been used so freely, as to leave about a fifth part only out of some 1600 epigrams unobjectionable on the scene of vice and immorality."¹⁴ Nixon, in 1927, claimed that only a fifth were objectionable, and Smith, in 1920, agreed: "The proportion of these objectionable epigrams is by no means as large as the majority of the people appear to suppose...hardly a seventh."¹⁵ By 1991, Sullivan deemed only one tenth of the epigrams obscene, but nonetheless acknowledged a strong sexual element in Martial.¹⁶ Such differing opinions can only reflect changes in societal and/or personal views over time since the text itself never changes.

The text itself never changes. This is where the focus needs to be, especially after having noted that readers' and scholars' views are always changing. People will probably never agree on what Martial was really like, nor on how we ought to read his epigrams; but they will always continue to study him. In a way, this is the great attraction to this poet. What does still have to be done, though, is an exploration and examination of the actual text -- an analysis of the content -- where, rather than making interpretations and drawing conclusions, we make observations and deductions.

Since my interest lies in Martial's depiction, or inclusion, of certain female personae, I have decided to explore only those epigrams where they appear. As a starting point, I have drawn up two tables showing where and when certain woman-types appear -- more of a statistical approach, but one which shows simply

¹⁴ Davies 112

¹⁵ Nixon, 44; and Smith 14.

¹⁶ J.P. Sullivan, Martial: The Unexpected Classic, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1991) 185.

the (in)frequency of the females' inclusion. The tables, though, reveal nothing of the meaning or point of the persona's appearance. Chapters three and four, therefore, set the women in context. Having gathered the personae together in terms of the types they represent, and given each type a separate section, I have explored and examined, compared and contrasted each type through content analysis. In some cases I was able to observe a consistent representation for a particular persona; in others, there seemed to be nothing in common between personae of the same type. Such observations, if they arose, are noted at the end of each section, and briefly summed up in the conclusion.

The point, then, of this essay is to explore objectively the female personae in Martial's epigrams. Ultimately, though, it is important to remember:

Literature says what it alone can say. When the critic has said everything in his power about a literary text, he has still said nothing; for the very existence of literature implies that it cannot be replaced by non-literature.¹⁷

¹⁷ T. Todorov, The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre, New York: Cornell University Press (1975) 22-23.

CHAPTER 2

Introductory Tables and Observations

In order to introduce and aid the examination of female personae in Martial's epigrams, I have drawn up two tables. The first table shows the distribution of the female-oriented poems. It includes, book-by-book, the total number of poems, the number of poems that involve women, and a list showing which particular poems depict the female persona. The number of poems involving women is further divided according to whether the woman features in her epigram, or is only casually mentioned. A casual mention might include 3.82, where the appearance of women is brief, and is neither the subject nor the point of its epigram. (The point of 3.82 is to show how repulsive Zoilus is, but we catch a glimpse at uxores [wives, 2], at a virga [a maid/concubine, 12], and at a tractatrix [a masseuse, 13].)

Table 2 shows the categories of Martial's female personae. I have decided on eight, since they work best for completeness of overview. These categories were chosen by observation: as certain women-types recurred, categories suggested themselves naturally.¹⁸ With each category there is a list showing which particular epigrams depict that woman-type. The "sexual" woman appears frequently, so the category on her is divided into four sub-sections: the lusty woman, the adulteress, the prostitute, and the lesbian. Within the category of "physical", poems are separated according to what physical data is provided (on

¹⁸ No goddesses, muses or mythological figures are included since poems where they appear are so occasional, and do not, therefore, warrant separate investigation here. Likewise, the Erotions poems are not included -- there are only three.

the body, smell, teeth, jewels, make-up, eyes, or hair). These categories are not exclusive, since some women belong to more than one (Julia's beauty in 6.13, for instance, lies in her ideal virtue, so she may be included in either the "ideal" or "beautiful" category). When this happens, either there is overlap (some poems will be counted twice), or the woman is included in what seems the most appropriate and relevant category.

Observations follow the tables.

TABLE 1: MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS ON WOMEN

BOOK	Total # poems	Woman appears	She features	She appears briefly	EPIGRAMS ON WOMEN (LISTED)
I	118	29 24.6%	22 18.7%	7 5.9%	10, 13, 19, 33, 34, 35, 37, 42, 55, 57, 62, 64, 68, 71, 72, 73, 74, 83, 84, 87, 90, 92, 94, 100, 102, 106, 114, 115, 116
II	93	28 30.1%	21 22.6%	7 7.5%	4, 9, 17, 25, 26, 28, 31, 32, 33, 34, 39, 41, 47, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 56, 60, 62, 63, 65, 66, 73, 83, 90, 92
III	100	33 33%	28 28%	5 5%	3, 8, 11, 13, 26, 30, 32, 33, 34, 39, 42, 51, 53, 54, 55, 59, 65, 68, 69, 70, 72, 76, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 90, 92, 93, 96, 97
IV	89	27 30.3%	23 25.8%	4 4.5%	4, 5, 9, 12, 13, 16, 17, 20, 22, 24, 28, 29, 31, 38, 50, 58, 59, 61, 62, 63, 65, 66, 71, 75, 81, 84, 87
V	84	16 19%	10 11.9%	6 7.1%	2, 4, 10, 12, 17, 29, 32, 34, 37, 43, 45, 61, 68, 75, 78, 84
VI	94	21 22.3%	18 19.2%	3 3.1%	3, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 22, 23, 27, 31, 34, 39, 40, 45, 66, 67, 69, 71, 75, 90, 93
VII	99	19 19.2%	13 13.1%	6 6.1%	10, 13, 14, 18, 21, 23, 30, 35, 40, 54, 58, 64, 69, 70, 75, 87, 88, 91
VIII	82	17 20.7%	10 12.2%	7 8.5%	intro., 5, 12, 31, 32, 33, 35, 43, 46, 50, 51, 54, 60, 69, 73, 79, 81
IX	103	17 16.5%	13 12.6%	4 3.9%	2, 4, 5, 10, 15, 29, 30, 32, 37, 40, 60, 62, 66, 67, 78, 80, 95
X	104	26 25%	23 22.1%	3 2.9%	8, 14, 16, 22, 29, 30, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 52, 55, 61, 63, 64, 67, 68, 69, 75, 81, 87, 90, 91, 95
XI	108	37 34.3%	29 26.9%	8 7.4%	2, 7, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 39, 40, 43, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 60, 61, 62, 64, 69, 71, 75, 78, 81, 87, 89, 91, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102, 104
XII	98	24 24.5%	18 18.3%	6 6.2%	7, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 31, 32, 38, 43, 44, 49, 52, 58, 59, 65, 79, 86, 91, 93, 95, 96, 97
XIII	127	2 1.6%	1 0.8%	1 0.8%	34, 96
XIV	223	17 7.6%	6 2.7%	11 4.9%	6, 8, 9, 26, 27, 56, 59, 63, 77, 134, 149, 174, 175, 187, 193, 203, 205

TABLE 2: CATEGORIES OF WOMEN IN MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

CATEGORY (woman-type)	EPIGRAMS (listed)
Ideal	I.35, 62, 68, 106; II.9; III.13, 34, 68, 69, 83, 87, 97; IV.71, 81, 84, 86; V.2; VI.27; VII.88; VIII. intro.; IX.5, 66; X.30, 63; XI.15, 16; XII.43 (TOTAL: 27)
Beautiful/Ugly	I.10, 33, 64; II.26; IV.20; V.17, 29, 45; VI.13, 23; VII.69; VIII.32, 54, 79; IX. 37; X.35; XI.19, 53; XII.21, 31 (TOTAL: 20)
Physical	<u>Body</u> : II.33, 52; III.3, 42, 51, 53, 72; VIII.60; XI.100, 101; XIV.134, 149; <u>Hair</u> : II.66; V.68; VI.12; XII.6; XIV.26, 27; <u>Smell</u> : I.87; III.55; IV.4, 87; V.4; VI.93; IX.62; XIV.59; <u>Teeth</u> : I.19, 72; II.41; V.43; XIV.56; <u>Jewels</u> : VIII.81; <u>Make-up</u> : I.72; IV.62; VII.13; VIII.33; XI.102; <u>Eye(s)</u> : II.33; III.8, 11, 39; IV.65; VIII.51; XII.22, 23 (TOTAL: 45)
Old	I.100; II.28; III.32, 76, 93; IV.5; VII.54, 75; IX.29, 80; X.8, 39, 67, 90; XI.87; XIII.34 (TOTAL: 16)
Rich	I.64; II.32, 65; IV.28, 61; V.32; VI.8, 15, 66; VII.64; VIII.12; X.41, 69; XII.97, 32 (TOTAL: 15)
SEXUAL: (a) Lusty	I.57, 73; II.25, 34, 49, 50, 73; IV.22, 84; VI.67; VII.14, 91; IX.32, 40, 67; X.22, 55, 75, 81; XI.20, 23, 40, 43, 60, 62, 78, 81, 104; XII.65, 91, 96; XIV.203, 205 (TOTAL: 33)
(b) Adulteress (also mistress)	I.62, 84; II.39, 47, 53, 56, 60, 62, 83; III.26, 30, 69, 70, 85, 92, 96; IV.9, 17, 29, 66; V.61, 75; VI.6, 7, 22, 31, 39, 45, 71, 90; VII.10, 35; IX.2, 60; X.14, 29, 40, 53, 91, 95; XI.7, 49, 71, 75; XII.26, 38, 86, 93; XIV.6, 8, 9 (TOTAL: 51)
(c) Prostitute	I.34, 35, 92; II.17, 31, 39, 63; III.54, 82, 90; IV.12, 38, 50; VII.18, 30; VIII.50; IX.4; X.68; XI.21, 29, 61; XII.55, 59; XIV.175 (TOTAL: 24)
(d) Lesbian	I.90; III.84; VII.67, 70 (TOTAL: 4)
Married	I.13, 33, 42, 55, 74; II.54, 90, 92; IV.13, 24, 58, 63, 75; VII.21, 23, 40, 58; VIII.35, 43, 81; IX.10, 15, 30, 78, 95; X.16, 38, 43; XI.69; XII.49, 52, 58 (TOTAL: 32)
Martial's "choice"	I.57, 115; II.33, 49, 90; III.32, 33, 53; IV.9; V.78; VI.40; VIII.12, 73; IX.32, 40, 67; X.8, 22; XI.19, 23, 27, 97, 100, 104 (TOTAL: 24)

(* These are poems in which Martial states, in the first person, what he prefers, or avoids when it comes to women; we cannot assume, however, that this is really what Martial wanted -- more on this later.)

OBSERVATIONS ON THE TABLES

Table 1

The book with the highest percentage of epigrams on women is 11, at 34.4%. Martial, then, speaks truthfully at 11.15: he wants (volo, 3) 11 to be naughtier (nequior, 4) than all the other little books. The book with the lowest percentage of epigrams on women is 13, at 1.6%. This might not be surprising since book 13 is a collection of mottos. The order of the books, running from highest to lowest percentage of epigrams on women, is: 11 3 4 2 10 12 1 6 8 7 5 14 9 13. The average percentage of epigrams on women is 21.9%. No book is dominated by epigrams on women; the highest is still only about 1 in 3. Nevertheless, there is quite a range of percentages, perhaps reflective of the varying numbers of epigrams per book, or of the numerous topics seen throughout.

In every book the number of poems featuring women is lower than the number of poems where women appear. The book with the highest incidence of epigrams featuring women is 3, at 28%. The book with the lowest is, again, 13, at 0.8%. The order of the books, from highest to lowest percentage of epigrams featuring women, is: 3 11 4 2 10 6 1 12 7 9 8 5 14 13. The average is 16.7%. As before, the range of percentages is quite wide.

The book with the highest rate of epigrams casually mentioning women is 8, at 8.5%. Predictably, the book with the lowest is 13, at 0.8%. The order of the books, from highest to lowest percentage of epigrams casually mentioning women, is: 8 2 11 5 12 7 1 3 14 4 9 6 10 13. The average is 5.2%. The percentages are noticeably lower than those where women are featured. The

biggest difference appears in book 3, where women are featured almost 6 times more often than they are briefly mentioned. Not all books show such disparity: book 13 features and casually mentions women at equal rates (0.8%).

Overall, there are no immediately apparent patterns, although book 13 is consistently the lowest, 11 is consistently high (first, second or third in order), and 1 is always in the middle.

It is both helpful and interesting to note the distribution of the appearances of Martial's female personae within each book. The table below shows the number of times women appear. For example, in book 6, between poems 60 and 69, women appear three times. A zero (0) means that there are no epigrams on women in the section; a dash (-) means that the book has ended. Note that the final column contains more than the usual ten epigrams.

Distribution of Female Appearances:

	1-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90-99	100-109	110-119	120-129	130-223
I	0	3	0	4	1	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	-	-
II	2	1	3	5	3	5	5	1	1	2	-	-	-	-
III	2	2	1	5	1	5	3	3	6	5	0	-	-	-
IV	3	4	5	2	0	3	5	2	3	-	-	-	-	-
V	2	3	1	3	2	0	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
VI	4	2	3	3	2	0	3	2	0	2	-	-	-	-
VII	0	4	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	1	-	-	-	-
VIII	1	1	0	4	2	3	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
IX	3	2	1	3	1	0	4	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
X	1	2	2	4	3	2	6	1	2	3	0	-	-	-
XI	2	3	6	1	4	3	5	3	3	3	4	-	-	-

XII	1	0	5	3	3	4	1	1	1	5	-	-	-	-
XIII	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	-
XIV	3	0	2	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	8

Among the books with a more even distribution are 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and 11. Less even distribution is seen in books 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, and 12. Books 13 and 14 have the least even distribution. Particularly high concentrations are found in book 3 epigrams 80-89, book 10 epigrams 60-69, and book 11 epigrams 20-29. Every book except the eleventh has a section that does not mention women. However, women are not absent for more than one section at a time (except in the final two books).

Table 2

The "sexual" woman-type appears most frequently: a total of 112 times.¹⁹ Within this category, the adulteress appears very often: just over 3% of the total number of epigrams (that is, not just those on women). The lesbian hardly appears. This difference might be due to Martial's own interest, or to a more general Roman interest or concern. We note later that very little is known about same-sex oriented Roman women, and that adultery is a common theme or topic in Latin literature. In this respect Martial follows observed trends; it is probable, then, that the frequent or infrequent inclusion of certain sexual woman-types reflects the cultural context and public rather than personal interest.

¹⁹ The totals are approximate because of possible overlap or exclusion of certain epigrams. The overall total from Table 2 is 291; this is less than the total number of epigrams involving women (314) because some poems feature women but do not fit into a category (such as the mother/son poems: 2.4 and 4.16). The average number of epigrams per category is 36; only the "physical" and "sexual" categories are above this.

Second to the "sexual" woman-type is the "physical" one; 45 epigrams show the physical aspects of women. In contrast, the rich woman appears least often: only 15 times. The old woman is not far behind, with only 16 appearances. The old woman, though, is given a very visual and detailed description when she does appear.

As with Table 1, it is beneficial to note the distribution of woman-types throughout the collection of epigrams. The table below shows the number of times a particular woman-type appears in any given book. For example, we see the rich woman twice in book 10. Noticeably large numbers are underlined.

	Ideal	Beautiful/ Ugly	Physical	Old	Rich	Marr- ied	Lusty	Adul- ter- ess	Pros- titute	Les- bian	"Marti- al's Cho- ice"
I	4	3	4	1	1	5	2	2	3	1	2
II	1	1	5	1	2	3	5	7	4	0	3
III	<u>7</u>	0	<u>9</u>	3	0	0	0	7	3	1	2
IV	4	1	4	1	2	5	2	4	3	0	0
V	1	3	3	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	1
VI	1	2	2	0	3	0	1	7	0	0	1
VII	1	1	1	2	1	4	2	2	2	2	0
VIII	1	3	4	0	1	3	0	0	1	0	2
IX	2	1	1	2	0	5	3	2	1	0	3
X	2	1	0	4	2	3	4	6	1	0	2
XI	2	2	3	1	0	1	<u>9</u>	4	3	0	<u>6</u>
XII	1	2	3	0	2	3	3	4	2	0	0
XIII	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
XIV	0	0	6	0	0	0	2	3	1	0	0

In book 11 we are not surprised to find so many lusty women. In general, there are higher numbers under the category of "adulteress"; considering also the fairly consistent appearance of this woman-type throughout, we might deduce that Martial is, or his readers are, preoccupied with the infidelle. Further exploration into the adulteress (later) may substantiate this.

Now, however, we begin to place the various types of women into context; we examine the first six categories of female personae in Martial's epigrams.

CHAPTER 3

Within this chapter six categories of female personae will be examined: ideal, beautiful/ugly, physical, old, rich, and married. We start with the "ideal" woman-type.

Martial's "Ideal" Female Personae

According to male Roman standards, the ideal woman was the sexually devoted wife, a woman of great virtue, with an impressive sense of moral uprightness: a univira. This woman has been honoured often in Latin literature.²⁰ In Martial's epigrams we examine the woman who is genuinely virtuous as well as the one who is not. First, though, we note Martial's advice or thoughts regarding

²⁰ See, for example, an epitaph from the 2nd Century B.C., found at Rome: "Stranger, I have only a few words to say. Stop and read them.--This is the unlovely tomb of a lovely woman. Her parents named her Claudia. She loved her husband with all of her heart. She bore two sons; one of these she leaves on earth, the other she has already placed under the earth. She was charming in speech, yet pleasant and proper in manner. She managed the household well. She spun wool.--I have spoken. Go on your way." [CIL 1.2.1211 (ILS 8403), J. Shelton, As The Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History, Oxford: Oxford University Press (1988) 45.]

See also Livy 10.23; Propertius Eleg. 4.11; Pliny Epist. 8.5.1 and 2. Also, a long inscription from Pharsalus to his wife, Turia, reveals the lengths Turia went to for her husband and family; she is portrayed as the ultimately devoted and loyal univira. See J.P.V.D. Balsdon, Roman Women: Their History and Habits, London: Bodley Head (edn. 2, 1974) 204. See also Women in the Classical World: Image and Text, New York: Oxford University Press (ed.s E. Fantham, H.P. Foley, N.B. Kampen, S.B. Pomeroy, H.A. Shapiro, 1994) 231-32, 326-27, and 276; S. Pomeroy, Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity, New York: Schocken Books (1975), who states that the ideal of the univira was "strictly Roman and without counterpart in Greece" (161). Also relevant is M.A. Ellison-Gillis, Propaganda and the Historical Image of Fulvia and Cleopatra (Queen's University M.A., 1991), some of whose material builds on an earlier thesis by A. Kirkpatrick Sowden, The Image of Roman Women in Literary and Epigraphical Documents of the Late Republic: A Historical Inquiry (Queen's M.A., 1973).

female readership (of his epigrams).²¹

Female Readership:

It is important always to be aware of the level of "reality" whenever Martial gives "advice". Does he mean what he says? Can we even tell? It is imperative not to suppose that we can ever recover or access Martial's own thoughts or feelings. At the same time, if we are to attempt to understand as much as possible about the poet and his work, we must not discount what he has to say. And what he says regarding female readership varies from book to book according to the content, and from reader to reader.

At 3.68 Martial advises the matrona: up to this point, the book has been written for her (1). Now it is written for him, with baths (thermae, 3), sports (gymnasium...stadium, 3), and naked men (nudos...viros, 4). Such things she should avoid seeing (parce videre, 4). The end of the poem, however, shows that Martial expects his advice will fall on deaf ears:

si bene te novi, longum iam lassa libellum
ponebas, totum nunc studiosa leges.

If I know you well, you were already weary of
the lengthy volume and putting it aside; but
now you will read with interest to the end.²²

²¹ On general readership of Martial, see E.E. Best, "Martial's Readers in the Roman World," CJ LXIV (1968) 208-12. The problem with this article is that Best raises an important issue – of literacy levels – in his final sentence ("...but they [Romans] did have to be literate to understand his poems"), but does not consider it throughout his examination. Low literacy levels would automatically and significantly reduce Martial's readership; this would change Best's conclusions. See Glazebrook's third chapter, which discusses women's literacy. Modern sources on literacy levels at Rome include W.V. Harris Ancient Literacy (1989); also Literacy in the Roman World (ed. J.H. Humphrey, 1991).

²² 3.68.11-12. Translations of Martial are from D.R. Shackleton Bailey in the Loeb Classical Library: Martial: Epigrams, London: Harvard University Press (ed. and transl. D.R. Shackleton Bailey, 1993) volumes i, ii, iii. Indelicate phrasing in his translation, however, will be amended throughout the chapters in order to avoid shocking unnecessarily; futuio, for instance, (at 1.34, 11.21, 11.71) has been changed to "screwed"

Like the start of book 3, 5 is dedicated to matrons, boys, and maidens (5.2.1-2). In 5.2 Martial advises those whose interest is with naughtinesses (nequitiae, 3) and jests (sales, 4) to read the first four little books (3-5) because this one is different: it is innocent. Less wanton language is also found in book 8. In the introduction, we see that 8 is devoted to Domitian's general policy (3-5);²³ the licentiousness typical of mime is sometimes written by men of high moral standing, but will not be permitted in this book (10-14).

In contrast, book 11 is steeped in naughtiness. Martial says other books are straight-laced and moral enough for a woman like Cato's wife, but not this one; so be warned (11.15.1-3). In general, though, at 3.69 we see that easy girls (faciles...puellae, 5) read Martial's verse, and chaste girls read the praiseworthy language (venerandaque sanctaque verba, 7) found in Cosconius' works.²⁴

It seems that Martial's female readership is not limited. Yet the poems written for women are: some verses are inappropriate for any woman, some are intended only for easy girls, and others are well-suited to matrons and maidens. Martial seems to want to limit not who reads his epigrams, but what epigrams the various "groups" of women are to read.

since it is less indelicate, yet the reader still feels the impact of the word, and it allows more parallel syntax in the translation.

²³ Domitian had a campaign to control immorality on the public stage. For information on the Emperor Domitian, see B.W. Jones, Domitian and the Senatorial Order, Philadelphia (1979); B.W. Jones, The Emperor Domitian, New York: Routledge (1992); K.H. Waters, "The Character of Domitian," Phoenix XVIII (1964) 49-77.

²⁴ Cosconius is a rare name, which suggests that it may be real. Yet regardless of this, and of the nature of the type of work "Cosconius" wrote, the point here is that easy girls -- and not chaste ones -- form part of Martial's readership.

Not really virtuous:

Now we explore poems where the woman is not virtuous: she is not ideal. At 4.71 Martial tells that no girl says no -- nulla puella negat (2, again at 4) -- despite his efforts to find one who will. Does this mean that there are no virtuous girls? No, there are a thousand...but even they do not say no (5-6)! Martial may be suggesting that "virtuous" girls are not truly or genuinely so. Recall 3.68 where the matrona reads on with interest. Yet non dat (6) means the girl does not give (favours): she is genuinely virtuous (or at least chaste). All the same, the thought is raised, and deserves further investigation.²⁵

At 3.86 despite forewarning (at 3.68) the puella casta reads on, thus putting her reputation up for necessary re-examination:

Ne legeres partem lascivi, casta, libelli,
praedixi et monui: tu tamen, ecce, legis.
sed si Panniculum spectas et, casta, Latinum,
non sunt haec mimis improbiora – lege.

I told you beforehand, warned you, virtuous lady, not to read part of my frolicsome book; –nonetheless you are reading it. But if you watch Panniculus, virtuous lady, and Latinus – these things are no more outrageous than the mimes – read away.

The repeated casta forces the reader to focus on it; its placement -- in the middle of the licentious booklet, and between two notorious mimes -- forces the reader to think about it. Might Martial be hinting that this woman is "chaste" (i.e. not really)? Recall 11.15. Right after, at 11.16, Martial writes:

tu quoque nequitas nostri lususque libelli
uda, puella, leges, sis Patavina licet.

You also, my girl, will not be dry as you read the naughty jests of my little book, though you

²⁵ 4.81 follows up on 4.17: Fabulla is told to say no, not to keep on saying no (negare iussi, pernegare non iussi, 5).

erubuit posuitque meum Lucretia librum,
sed coram Bruto; Brute, recede: leget.

come from Patavium. Lucretia blushed and
put my book aside, but that was in front of
Brutus. Brutus, withdraw: she will read.²⁶

Lucretia is often depicted as the ultimately chaste woman; we expect her to blush and put the book down.²⁷ This Lucretia must be the Lucretia since Brutus (her avenger) is mentioned; hence the lack of surprise when she blushes. Yet, once Brutus has gone, she reads more. The text indicates that the woman's modesty is feigned.²⁸

In the examples above, the woman's lack of virtue is suggested. At 3.87 and 4.84 it is stated: expectations of a virtuous woman are explicitly reversed in the sting, when the opposite is found. 3.87 reveals that Chione is not as pure as one might initially believe.²⁹ At 4.84, no man in all of Rome can say he has slept with Thais (1-2). Is she so chaste? No, she sucks (fellat, 4). The final fellat tells all; this woman is only superficially virtuous. In "reality" she is quite the opposite.

The woman who is not ideal is the woman who is not virtuous. In Martial's epigrams it seems that many women are superficially chaste, but truly unchaste. Martial deceives expectations by turning the Lucretias and matronae into avid readers of licentiousness. Not all female personae lack virtue however.

²⁶ 11.16.6-10. Patavian: from a town (now Padova/Padua) with "a reputation for strict morals". See Pliny Epist. 1.14.6. See also Shackleton Bailey vol.iii, p.17.

²⁷ Lucretia killed herself after Sextus Tarquinius had raped her; she said she would rather die than be unfaithful, or unchaste. See Ovid (Fasti 2.720-58) who depicts her as the model wife. See also Women in the Classical World 225-27 and 244.

²⁸ This might remind the reader of 7.88.4 where the virtuous young wife reads Martial's verse to her straight-laced husband.

²⁹ See 3.97: Martial orders Rufus not to let Chione read his verse; she can be hurt by what he says about her.

Really virtuous:

The woman of virtue appears, although not consistently. Mostly she is seen in books 9 and 10; she appears briefly in books 3 and 6. In one of several poems dedicated to Domitian's legal reforms to marriage, Martial says that pudor has returned to marriages, has even come to exist in brothels:

qui nec cubili fuerat ante te quondam,
pudor esse te coepit et lupanari.

Modesty, which before you in days gone by
was not to be found even in the marriage bed,
has through you come to exist even in the
brothel.³⁰

Ideal women can and do exist.³¹ In 6.27 Nepos has a daughter who is witness to her mother's virtue: testis maternae nata pudicitiae (4). At 9.66 Fabullus' wife is ideal: she is beautiful (formosa, 1), virtuous (pudica, 1), and young (puella, 1). As with 6.27, this is not the point of the poem; my point of including both this and 6.27 is to demonstrate that the virtuous woman does appear, if only in a fleeting comment. Such is the case again at 10.30: Tibur is the home of Apollinaris' virtuous wife (sancta uxor, 5).

Also, 10.63 is an epitaph commemorating a woman who has borne ten children (quinque...pueros. totidem...puellas, 5), and who has been a wife devoted

³⁰ 9.5(6).8-9. This poem seems to be in serious praise of Domitian; there does not seem to be any reason for suspecting that lines 8-9 are sarcastic or mocking in tone.

³¹ Literary evidence suggesting that a (fictional) woman could be, or was, chaste appears often. For instance, in Propertius Eleg. 4.11, Cornelia defends herself from the grave; she declares her chastity and fidelity to Paullus. Historical evidence suggesting a real woman's chastity arises mostly from inscriptions. The inscription of Lucius Aurelius Hermia's wife, Aurelia Philematium, tells that, "chaste in body,...she lived faithful to her faithful husband." (It is important to read inscriptions with caution, aware that they sometimes become less accurate, in a standardized, ideal benediction.) See also Shelton 47, and Sowden's thesis.

to only one man (7-8): she is truly ideal. Mentula (8), though, is shocking and seemingly out-of-place in an otherwise gentle remembrance. Perhaps Martial felt (structurally) obliged to insert a nasty sting at the end, or he aimed simply at surprising his readers; but this is speculation. Again, the point here is to see that the truly virtuous woman exists.

Upon inspection, it seems that the woman lacking true virtue is given lengthier, and more detailed, literary attention in the epigrams than her counterpart. The ideal woman appears momentarily in isolated incidents. Martial makes a point of revealing the unchaste woman, often making her the subject (or target?) of her own poem. In contrast, he fleets past the truly chaste woman so that we hardly notice her: she is rarely the subject.³²

Martial's "Beautiful and Ugly" Female Personae

From the category of the "ideal" we move on to that of the "beautiful and ugly" woman. It might seem odd to place beauty and ugliness together in the same category since they are usually considered opposites. But just as the virtuous woman is not always so, we might suspect that Martial's "beautiful" woman can sometimes be more aptly described as ugly.

"Beautiful" and "ugly" are not simply visual descriptions; they may refer to character, behaviour, or other qualities. In Martial, there are women who are

³² This might be because the truly chaste woman is less interesting to the reader -- from then and now. Also, here is an example of overlap: there are ideal wives, given their own poems -- more on this later, in the "married" category, p. 54 sqq..

indisputably ugly, women who are genuinely beautiful, and women who think they are goodlooking, but are not. In this third section -- of "mis-self-perception/portrayal" -- we confirm that beauty and ugliness are not always mutually exclusive.

Truly ugly:

Ugliness does not escape Martial's notice; in fact, it escapes no man's. At

9.37, Galla's hair, teeth, and face are unnatural:

cum sis ipsa domi mediaque omere Subura,
fiant absentes et tibi, Galla, comae,
nec dentes aliter quam Serica nocte reponas.
et iaceas centum condita pyxidibus,
nec tecum facies tua dormiat....

You are at home yourself, Galla, but you are made up in the middle of Subura. Your hair is manufactured in your absence. You lay your teeth aside at night as you do your silks, and lie stored in a hundred caskets. Your face does not sleep with you.³³

Her false everything creates the illusion of beauty, but her true ugliness is noticed (9-10). The "beautiful" woman is ugly, and is caught in her deception. 6.23 is similar: Lesbia's face (her ugliness) works against her urging and seductive hands and voice: "tu licet et manibus blandis et vocibus instes, / te contra facies imperiosa tua est" (3-4). Again, the woman's ugliness is noticed; here it is also detrimental.

5.29 is humorous: if Gellia sends Martial a hare and tells him he will be handsome for a week ("formosus septem, Marce, diebus eris" 2), and if this is true, then Gellia has never eaten a hare (edisti numquam, Gallia, tu leporem 4)!³⁴

³³ 9.37.1-5.

³⁴ There was a superstition that eating a hare made the eater beautiful. See Pliny N.H.

Martial notices her unattractiveness.

Ugliness is detected and mocked; but it does not always have a negative effect on the woman. At 1.10, Maronilla is wooed by Gemellus:

Petit Gemellus nuptias Maronillae
et cupit et instat et precatur et donat.
adeone pulchra est? immo foedius nil est.
quid ergo in illa petitur et placet? tussit.

Gemellus is a-wooing Maronilla. He is eager and insistent, begs her, gives her presents. Is she such a beauty? On the contrary, she couldn't be uglier. So what is so desirable about her, so attractive? Her cough.

Aha! though, the final sting tells the reader why he woos this ugly woman. Her cough makes her likely to die.³⁵

All of these female personae are undeniably unattractive. Despite attempts to hide her ugliness -- by improving her visual appearance, by seducing, by focussing on somebody else's flaws, even by coughing -- Martial sees through this woman's deception. The humour lies in the reversal of the ugly woman's expectations to seem beautiful to (male) onlookers.

Truly beautiful:

Just as the ugly woman appears, so does the persona of genuine beauty. These women exemplify the ideal univira, and are honoured and praised. 11.53 is dedicated to Claudia Rufina:

28.260. See also Shackleton Bailey's note vol.i, p.383.

³⁵ On coughs, see also 2.26 (here, Naevia uses her cough to her advantage), and 5.39. For information concerning the woman's dowry as belonging to the husband (in a manus-marriage, even in a free marriage according to strict law), see J.F. Gardner, Women in Roman Law and Society, London: Croom Helm (1986) 97-116 (esp. 97-8 and 106). On wills and the distribution of the deceased wife's estate, see Gardner chapter 9 (163-204): "Inheritance and Bequest."

Claudia caeruleis cum sit Rufina Britannis
edita, quam Latiae pectora gentis habet!
quale decus formae! Romanam credere matres
Italides possunt, Athides esse suam.
di bene quod sancto peperit fecunda marito,
quod sperat generos quodque puella nurus,
sic placeat superis, ut coniuge gaudeat uno
et semper natis gaudeat illa tribus.

Though Claudia Rufina sprang from
the Blue Britons, how Latin is her
mind! What beauty of form! Italian
mothers might believe her Roman,
Attic mothers their own. Thank the
gods, she has been fertile of offspring
to her virtuous husband, and, though
but a girl, hopes for sons- and
daughters-in-law. So may it please the
High Ones that she rejoice in one
partner and rejoice always in three
children.

Claudia Rufina is very Latin, fertile, and has a virtuous husband to whom she has always been faithful. It is unexpected to find this genuinely affectionate poem in book 11, amidst all the "naughtiness". It may be included to emphasize the contrast between this book and others, or to remind the reader that Martial's verse is not all licentiousness. Alternatively, since he praises a British (that is, unRoman) paragon, Martial may be observing then identifying genuinely Roman women as decadent.

Other women of truly beautiful character are Sulpicia and Julia. At 10.35 Martial declares that all young wives and husbands who are keen to please their spouse should read Sulpicia (1-4), because she tells of pure and lawful love (castos docet et pios amores, 8). As schoolmate or teacher, she improves whoever is around, even a certain Sappho (15-16). Julia is the addressee at 6.13; she is very beautiful:

Quis te Phidiaco formatam, Iulia, caelo,
vel quis Palladiae non putet artis opus?
candida non tacita respondet imagine lygdos
et placido fulget vivus in ore decor.

Julia, who would not think you molded
by Phidias' chisel or a work of Pallas'
artistry? The white lygdus matches
with a speaking likeness, and living
beauty shines in your face.³⁶

³⁶ 6.13.1-4. Lygdus: Parian marble from the Cyclades. See Shackleton Bailey vol.ii, p.11.

To win back Mars' and the Thunderer's hearts, even Juno and Venus should ask Julia for the the girdle which Julia holds, the girdle which inspires love (5-8). Her love surpasses that of the immortals.

We also see Marcella, at 12.21. Like Claudia Rufina, she is not Roman by birth, but any Roman would want her among them (1-4) because she has so rare and pleasing a quality (tam rarum, tam dulce sapis, 3). Marcella's beauty lies in her total embodiment of the Roman woman; Martial closes the poem by saying she by herself makes Rome for him (Romam tu mihi sola facies, 10).³⁷ Because of this poem's thematic similarity to 11.53 (non-Roman woman praised for embodying Roman female ideal), Martial may be discovering again that some native Roman women are substandard.

Another beautiful persona is Theophila. She is beautiful because she is praiseworthy at everything she does. At 7.69 Martial tells us about her clever mind (she knows her philosophy, 2-4), her extraordinary taste (transcending expectations for her sex, 6), her knowledge of music (8), and her verse-making (which is not inferior to the works of Sappho, 9-10). She is seemingly well-respected by her male counterparts. It is curious, however, that the highly literate woman is seriously praised. Contrast 7.69 with 11.19, where Martial does not want to marry Galla because she is so learned : "Quaeris cur nolim te ducere, Galla? diserta es" (1). Contrast also 2.90, where Martial wants a wife who is not too educated: sit mihi...non doctissima coniunx (9). Perhaps Theophila is praiseworthy because she does not impose her leamedness, nor brag about it. At any rate, her

³⁷ Also on Marcella: 12.31.

intelligence is one of several positive traits, all genuinely admired in 7.69.³⁸

These women are deemed beautiful because of their outstanding qualities. None is singled out for her visual beauty. Each embodies a deeper sense of beauty: of devotion, of character, of commitment, of behaviour.

Mis-perception and portrayal of self:

We look first at the way certain women perceived themselves. It is important to remember that this "self" perception is through Martial; as such, it is really Martial's perception of how each woman sees herself. At 4.20 Caerellia says she is old, but is really a doll (pupa); and Gellia says she is a doll, but is really an old woman (1-2). Each is unbearable: one is absurd (ridicula, 4), the other is annoying (putidula, 4). Each woman perceives herself to be the opposite of what, in "reality", she is.

Fabulla is targeted in a similar epigram. At 1.64 Fabulla says she is goodlooking (bella, 1), young (puella, 1), and rich (dives, 2). Although that might be true, the fact that she says such things makes her neither pretty nor young nor wealthy (3-4). Her self-perception is inaccurate. Like Fabulla, at 5.45 Bassa says she is beautiful (formosam, 1) and young (puellam, 1). But, somebody who is beautiful and young would not say so: "istud quae non est dicere, Bassa, solet" (2).

Fabulla becomes the focus again, at 8.79. She is young and beautiful because those whom she has around her are either old hags (vetulae, 1) or very

³⁸ On the educated woman, see Allison Glazebrook's thesis, Education of Women in Antiquity: Women's Intellectual Activities and Educational Opportunities (Queen's University M.A., 1994), especially chapter iii. See also Pomeroy, 171, who discusses how education might enhance a woman's reputation.

ugly (turpes, 2). If Fabulla believes she is young and attractive because of the company she keeps, she is misguided.

Now we see how some women portray themselves. Again, this is through Martial. At 1.33 we see that Gellia mourns her father's death in front of people: "si quis adest, iussae prosiliunt lacrimae", (2). It is all a show: when there are no people around, there are no tears: amissum non flet cum sola (1). Gellia portrays herself as a truly grieving daughter; in truth, she is no mourner. She appears again at 5.17. Here, she boasts about her high social standing and impressive lineage (1-2). She says she could only marry a senator (whose toga had a broad purple stripe: lato clavo, 3). Yet she married a police captain (cistibero, 4).³⁹

Martial's women perceive and portray themselves inaccurately. Some think or say they are beauties; if so, it is only in their minds since these women are, in fact, not beautiful, but ugly. Others attempt to show that their beauty lies in their genuine feeling, or praiseworthy background. Such attempts are thwarted as their true nature appears: one lacks feeling while the other has unimpressive social rank. In this respect, they too are ugly (though not in a visual sense).

We see, then, that while some women are noticeably ugly, and others deserve nothing but admiration, still others believe they are beautiful (or young or rich) but are not. After examining some instances, we find that beauty and ugliness are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

8.54(53) demonstrates the merging of positive with negative, physical and characteristic, beauty and ugliness:

³⁹ See Shackleton Bailey's note vol.i, p. 369: "a cistiber ("this side of the Tiber") seems to have been a minor police functionary."

Formosissima quae fuere vel sunt,
sed durissima quae fuere vel sunt,
o quam te fieri. Catulla, vellem
formosam minus aut minus pudicam!

Fairest of women that ever were or are, but
cruellest of women that ever were or are, oh,
how I would have wished you, Catulla, to
become less fair or else less virtuous!

This joke -- about a lover unexpectedly wishing his woman less attractive -- is included because visual beauty and characteristic ugliness come together: double opposites join within one person. There is no mutual exclusivity between beauty and ugliness. Further, beauty is not always positive, nor desirable. Just as the ugly Maronilla (recall 1.10) is wooed, the beautiful Catulla of 8.54 is not wanted for her good looks. For along with her good looks she is durissima.

Martial's "Physical" Female Personae

Now we examine the more physical data about the literary female persona in the epigrams to see what sort of physical image Martial provides. There are a lot of data, so there are sub-categories according to information provided on coiffure, teeth, jewels, cosmetics, odour, eyes, and body.

First we note that a woman's appearance was not unimportant in Rome during the first century.⁴⁰ Both literature and art reveal this. It was common, at least among the upper classes, for both women and men to dye their hair with henna; Ovid (Amores 1.14) jokes about his girlfriend having a bad experience with hair colouring. In terms of clothing, cosmetics, and jewelry, women who dressed

⁴⁰ For women's appearance, see Balsdon chapter XIII (p.252-81): "Women's Daily Life". He discusses dress, coiffure, make-up and jewels, baths, women at home, women abroad.

extravagantly were often criticized or derided; but some husbands dressed their wives elaborately in order to display their wealth, affluence, and military glory.⁴¹

Hair:

From extant literature it seems that a Roman woman's hairstyle or colour was important. In his sixth satire Juvenal jokes about the frantic woman whose maid has done her hair wrong.

nam si constituit solitoque decentius optat
omari et properat iamque expectatur in hortis
aut apud Isiacae potius sacraia lenae,
disponit crinem laceratis ipsa capillis
nuda umero Psecas infelix nudisque mamillis.
"altior hic quare cincinnus?" taurea punit
continuo flexi crimen facinusque capilli.

If she has made a date and wants to be specially *soignée* and is now in a hurry and, for some time, has been due at the park (or, a more probable place, the temple of 'Isis the Madam'), then her coiffeuse, the unfortunate Psecas, will have to submit to having her hair torn out, her shoulders and breasts uncovered. "Why is this curl sticking up?" And at once the strap of bull-hide comes down to punish the heinous crime of the errant ringlet.⁴²

The woman excessively distressed over something seemingly petty appears also in Martial. At 2.66 Lalage punishes her maid because a single ringlet is out of place:

Unus de toto peccaverat orbe comarum

A single ringlet out of the whole circle

⁴¹ For criticism and derision, see Cato's comments recorded by Livy (34.3.1-3), or Valerius' assertion that "cosmetics and adornments are women's decorations" (Livy 34.5.8-10), or Plautus (*Aulularia* 498-550). For women showing off husbands' wealth, see Valerius Maximus 6.3.10-12. See also Women in the Classical World 261-63, and 301; and Shelton 305-6.

⁴² 6.487-93. The translation is taken from Niall Rudd, *Juvenal: The Satirist*, Oxford: Oxford Clarendon Press (intro. and notes by W. Barr), 1991. See also Juvenal 6.474-76 and 501-03.

anulus, incerta non bene fixus acu.
hoc facinus Lalage speculo, quo viderat, ulta est,
et cecidit saevis icta Plecusa comis.

of hair had gone amiss, fixed insecurely with an unsteady pin. Lalage punished this misdeed with the mirror in which she had seen it, and Plecusa fell smitten, victim of the cruel tresses.⁴³

Just as the woman who is obsessed with the perfect up-do is mocked, so is the woman whose hair colouring is unnatural. At 5.68 Martial sends Lesbia some hair from a northern people (Arctoa de gente, 1) so that she can see how much yellower her hair is ("ut scires quanto sit tua flava magis", 2). This is probably not a compliment, but a jab at her excessive hair-colouring: Lesbia obviously does not get her roots done!⁴⁴ 14.27 also deals with hair dye: Martial advises the old, white-headed woman (cana, 1) who chooses to colour her "superannuated" hair (longaevos...capillos, 1) to accept balls (pilas, 2) of beechwood-dye from the Mattiaci. Her other alternative is to go bald (calva, 2).⁴⁵

Women do go bald. This is the case at 12.(6)7 also:

Toto vertice quod gerit capillos
annos si tot habet Ligeia, trima est.

If Ligeia has as many years as she carries hairs on her entire head, she is three years old.

If women lose their hair, they can hide their baldness by buying and wearing "captive hair" -- captivis comis.⁴⁶ They can also use wigs on top of their real hair for

⁴³ 2.66.1-4

⁴⁴ This idea comes from Shackleton Bailey's note in vol.i, p.413.

⁴⁵ Mattiaci: a tribe of the Chatti in the area of Wiesbaden. Or perhaps "from Mattium," their settlement (Shackleton Bailey vol.iii, p.239). Hair was dyed with balls of sapo (cf. "soap" and "savon"), consisting of goat's fat and beechwood ashes (see Pliny, N.H. 28.191, and Shackleton Bailey vol.iii, p.237).

⁴⁶ 14.26.1. "Captive" because most of the hair for wigs came from Germany, specifically from German captives; see Shackleton Bailey vol.iii, p.237.

fashion purposes. Martial's keen eye notices false hair, perhaps because it looks unnatural. At 6.12 he tells the reader that Fabulla swears the hair she buys is her own (1). Then he asks: is that perjury? (numquid...peierat? 2) Therefore, the woman's natural look is detected despite her attempts to hide and improve it -- by style, dye, or wig.

Teeth:

Several epigrams feature teeth. At 5.43 we see that Thais has black teeth, and Laecania has white. Why? One has bought her teeth, the other has her own: emptos haec habet, illa suos (2). Just as women buy hair when they go bald, they also purchase artificial teeth when their own rot. Laelia uses dentures and bought hair, nor does it shame her (12.23.1). Note the nec te pudet (1): should it shame her? Might Martial believe this woman's quest for beauty pathetic, or self-deceiving? Possibly, since at 1.72 he seems to mock Aegle who believes she has teeth because she has purchased bones and Indian horn (3-4).

At 1.19 Martial jokes -- in mock reassurance -- at the woman who loses her teeth:

Si memini, fuerant tibi quattuor, Aelia, dentes:
expulsit una duos tussis et una duos.
iam segura potes totis tussire diebus:
nil istic quod agat tertia habet.

If I rightly remember, you had four teeth, Aelia. One cough expelled two, another two more. Now you can cough all day long with mind at ease. A third cough in your case can have no effect.

Purchased teeth, and losing teeth are not the only butts of Martial's dental quips. The woman with awful teeth is also derided. At 2.41 Martial advises Maximina to avoid laughter at all costs (1-12) because she has three teeth that are the colour of pitch or boxwood (plane piceique buxeique, 7). She must be as solemn as

possible (13), hang around mourners (19-20), watch only the tragedies (21), and weep (plora, 23)!

It seems that Martial's keen eye is at work again as he notices rotten and false teeth. The female personae can neither deceive him nor escape his notice in their quest for improved physical appearances.

Jewels:

A pretty up-do, or shining white teeth may distract from an otherwise unattractive face. Jewelry also helps: necklaces and earrings give the illusion of beauty.⁴⁷ Martial, though, does not write about jewels except at 8.81. Gellia swears by her pearls: jurat Gellia...per uniones (4). She loves them like family:

hos fratres vocat, hos vocat sorores,
hos natis amat acrius duobus.

These she calls her brothers, these she calls
her sisters, these she loves more
passionately than her two children.⁴⁸

If she lost them she would not last an hour (8-9). How handy, says Martial, might Annaeus Serenus be (10-11)! If Annaeus Serenus is a thief, the humour becomes obvious.⁴⁹ The interesting point, however, is that Martial does not include women wearing jewels in order to beautify themselves.

⁴⁷ Juvenal, Satire 6.457-59, exaggerates when he talks of the woman bedecked in jewels: when she is jewelled up, a woman will do anything.

⁴⁸ 8.81.6-7.

⁴⁹ See Shackleton Bailey's suggestion, note vol.ii, p.230; for "hand" as thieving see 8.59.4, and 11.54.5. Annaeus Serenus was, however, a real person, known for being a go-between amongst lovers; he was a friend of Seneca, and the go-between for Nero and Acte. Since she has children, Gellia is probably a married, cheating woman whose lover can please her immensely by sending her pearls via Serenus.

Make-up:

Martial spends more time depicting the woman who uses cosmetics to improve her looks.⁵⁰ In his sixth satire Juvenal describes this persona: she coats her face with so many layers of dough and other hideous ointments that her husband's lips get embedded; he asks if this is a face, or an ulcer (461-73). Martial's poems are neither as detailed nor as visual. Mostly he deals with the colour of the woman's face. At 1.72 we see that Lycoris, who is blacker than a falling mulberry, fancies herself in white lead: "quae nigrior est cadente moro, / cerussata sibi placet Lycoris" (5-6).⁵¹

Many of the named women in the epigrams are fictional, and attempts to find common themes for any particular woman are usually futile. "Lycoris", however, is consistently depicted as black and wanting to whiten her face. Aside from 1.72, we see her at 7.13 and 4.62. In 7.13 she travels to Tibur because she has heard that the sun there makes everything white (1-2); but she returned still black: parvo tempore nigra redit (4).⁵² At 4.62 she has, again, moved to Tibur because she believes she will turn white there:

⁵⁰ For Martial on the woman's make-up, see Duff 192.

⁵¹ "Lycoris" is associated with Cornelius Gallus (as an elegist); see Virgil Ec. 10.42. Martial sometimes adopts names already used or created by others in literature; see also the Horatian (Hor. Carm. 1.33.2) name "Glycera" in 6.40. This may be a clue that some women's names are made up, and/or that the women are literary creations, if not real women being concealed; that is, the names are used for word-play and literary effects. (Perhaps a good topic for further investigation.) Furthermore, in conversation with Dr. Falkner at Queen's, the suggestion arose that the name "Lycoris" may be derived from, or associated with, lux ("light"); if so, we understand why this persona wants to become white: her name suggests pale appearance, or complexion.

⁵² Shackleton Bailey informs: "The sulphurous exhalations of the springs at Tibur were supposed to have the property of bleaching things" vol.ii, p.84.

Tibur in Herculaneum migravit nigra Lycoris,
omnia dum fieri candida credit ibi.

Swarthy Lycoris moved to Herculean Tibur,
in the belief that everything there turns
white.

Such consistent representation alerts the reader to the possibility that this named woman might be more than a persona. At any rate, these epigrams show that whitening the face is an option for Martial's women. Using other cosmetics is another option. Applying too much make-up, though, is not good. Martial touches upon this briefly at 8.33: he reveals that Fabulla's face is heaped with chalk that is thicker than the "bowl" (phialae, 2) that Paulus has given him: "crassior in facie vetulae stat creta Fabullae" (17). Martial complains that the supposed "bowl" (phialae nomen habere iubes, 2) is really no thicker than a leaf (folium, 1).

Martial, then, sometimes mocks the woman who uses cosmetics. Her attempts at hiding her natural look, and replacing it with a more beautiful one, are not only detected, but derided.

Smell:

Within the epigrams, Martial depicts other women who try to hide different, less attractive physical qualities. There are those with bad breath for instance. At 1.87 Fescennia (the Fescennine woman⁵³) attempts to hide her alcohol breath with pastilles (pastillos Cosmi, 2). Her efforts are in vain since the pastilles smear her teeth (linunt dentes, 3) and cause her to belch: this worsens her breath (4-6). She should abandon her detected, failing tricks and just be drunk: "notas ergo

⁵³ The Fescennine festivities were known as times for great frivolity and drinking; thus, a "Fescennine" woman would likely have alcohol breath. Interestingly this is the only extant occurrence of this name in Latin literature.

nimis fraudes deprensaque furta / iam tollas et sis ebria simpliciter" (7-8). Then, at 5.4 Myrtale, whose aromatic name is surely part of the pun, tries to hide her wine breath with laurel leaves (folia...lauri, 2-3). She too is caught in her deception.

There are personae with bad body odours also.⁵⁴ At 9.62 Philaenis wears purple not because she is haughty (non est ambitiosa nec superba, 3), but because she likes the smell (delectatur odore, 4): it covers her own bad odour.⁵⁵ Philaenis' deception is detected. 3.55 is similar: Gellia uses all sorts of oils and scents to smell better (1-2). She ought not to be pleased about this (nolo...placeas tibi. Gellia 3); even dogs smell good with all these scents ("scis, puto, posse meum sic bene olere canem", 4). Deception is again detected.⁵⁶

At 4.87 Bassa always has a baby beside her (1-2), not because she is fond of them (infantaria non est, 3), but because she tends to break wind (pedere Bassa solet, 4). Bassa's agenda is no secret.

Martial spares no expense in detail at 6.93. Thais smells really awful --

Tam male Thais olet quam non fullonis avari
testa vetus media sed modo fracta via,
non ab amore recens hircus, non ora leonis,
non detracta cani transtiberina cutis.
pullus abortivo nec cum putrescit in ovo,
amphora corrupto nec vitata garo.

Thais smells worse than the veteran
crock of a stingy fuller, recently broken
in the middle of the road, or a billy
goat fresh from his amours, or a lion's
mouth, or a hide from beyond Tiber
torn from a dog, or a chicken rotting in
an aborted egg, or a jar polluted with
putrid garum ⁵⁷

⁵⁴ On smells in general, see S. Lilja, The Treatment of Odours in the Poetry of Antiquity, Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica (1974).

⁵⁵ Tyrian-dyed garments apparently smelled particularly raunchy; see Shackleton Bailey vol.ii, p.288. On female body odour and the scents used to cover it, see J.P. Sullivan, "Martial's Sexual Attitudes," Philologus CXXIII (1979) 300.

⁵⁶ Some scents are all right, though; see 14.59.

⁵⁷ 6.93.1-6. From Shackleton Bailey's notes (vol.ii, p.73): line1: Fullers used urine in their trade, and used to collect it at street corners in jars. "Stingy" because he would keep

-- and she goes to great lengths to drown her odour, using chalk (creta, 9), vinegar (acida, 9), and bean meal (faba, 10). Ultimately, though, when she believes she is safe, she still smells rotten, like herself (11-12). se tutam...putavit (11) is key; this woman, as the others, believes she is fooling everybody. Yet everybody knows the truth. The woman's deceived expectations provide the comic effect -- not only concerning smell, but with hair, teeth, and cosmetics as well.

Eye(s):

Women can buy hair and teeth, but not eyes. Recall 12.23: Laelia cannot do anything about her eye: "quid facies oculo, Laelia? non emitur" (2). She cannot complete the beautification process. Curiously, whenever Martial mentions women and eyes, it is because the woman has only one eye; and this is not at all attractive. At 12.22 Philaenis has one eye (lusca, 1), and is described as uncomely (indecenter, 1). In fact, she would be more comely if she were blind (esset caeca decentior, 2). At 2.33 one of the excuses Martial gives for refusing to kiss Philaenis is that she is one-eyed: "cur non basio te, Philaeni? lusca es" (3).

Philaenis appears as one-eyed again at 4.65. She weeps from only one eye because she has only one (1-2). This poem is ambivalent: there is no obvious mocking or derision. As with ugly women, one-eyed women are not always deemed unattractive. In fact, at 3.8 Quintus loves (amat, 1) Thais, who has just one eye (luscam, 1). Martial cannot understand Quintus' feelings; to Martial,

the crock for a long time. line 4: Tiber: where tanners pursued their trade. line 6: garum = sauce made of the intestines and offal of mackerel. One other epigram about a woman with terrible odour is 4.4: Bassa smells worse than many things, but makes no attempts to hide her smell. This poem is similar in structure to 6.93.

Quintus is blind, because he is not put off by Thais' one eye: "unum oculum Thais non habet, ille duos", 2.⁵⁸

There is no deception involved when a woman has just one eye; she can neither hide it nor buy a replacement.

Body:

We now examine epigrams on the female body in general. Just as women try to hide imperfections of hair, teeth, and face, they also attempt to conceal unattractive bodies. At 3.42 Polla tries to hide her belly's wrinkles with bean meal (1). Martial advises that it is better to show her blemish openly (3), since trouble kept hidden is believed to be worse than it is: "quod tegitur, maius creditur esse, malum" (4). In contrast, at 3.3 the woman hides her pretty face (fomosam faciem, 1) behind make-up, but does not keep her unattractive body (non formoso corpore, 2) hidden. Martial, claiming divine instruction, says she should either reveal her face or conceal her body (3-4).

Saufeia hides her body at 3.72 since she does not want to bathe with Martial. Martial suspects there is something very bad about her physique – saggy breasts (pannosae...mammae, 3), belly wrinkles (sulcos uteri, 4), some sort of private protrusion (aliquid cunni prominet ore, 6)? He thinks there is nothing like that: she is most beautiful (pulcherrima, 7) naked. If that is true, then she has a blemish much worse than any of those mentioned: she's stupid (fatua, 8). Martial dismisses Saufeia's concerns about her body; but he loses all chances of seeing

⁵⁸ At 3.11 we see that Quintus has complained about this poem. For references to blindness over love, see 8.51. Compare Lucretius (DRN 4, 1150 ff.) who says that men are often blinded by love as they give undeserved credit to their loves.

her naked by calling her fatua.

Note the mention of women bathing at 3.3 and 3.72. Other bathing women appear in the same book. At 3.51 as Martial admires Galla's legs and hands, she says "You'll like me better naked" ('nuda placebo magis', 2). Yet she avoids bathing with him. Perhaps she is afraid of not liking Martial (3-4)! Shackleton Bailey suggests that Martial is hinting that Galla has some unsightliness of her own which she wants to hide.⁵⁹ In this way, it is similar to 3.72. Martial may be genuinely worried about Galla not liking him naked; we cannot know, except the genre of epigram dictates that we expect some sort of sting; a rhetorical question in the final line seems more likely than a show of lacking self-confidence.

Spatale is another bathing woman, at 2.52. She does not try to hide her body though. She has to pay three times the regular bathing fare -- for herself and her two large breasts:

Novit loturos Dasius numerare. Poposcit
mammosam Spatalen pro tribus: illa dedit.

Dasius knows how to count his
bathers. He charged big-bosomed
Spatale for three. She paid.

Generous-breasted women feature elsewhere in the epigrams. 14.134 is about the breastband:

Fascia, crescentes dominae compesce papillas,
ut sic quod capiat nostra tegatque manus.

Band, compress my lady's swelling
breasts, So that my hand may find
something to clasp and cover.

And the wrap, in 14.149, fears the big-breasted woman:

Amictorium: Wrap

⁵⁹ Shackleton Bailey vol.i, p.237.

Mammosas metuo; tenerae me tradere puellae,
ut possint niveo pectore lina frui.

I fear big-breasted women. Hand me
over to a young girl, so that my linen
may enjoy a snowy bosom.

Big-breastedness, then, does not seem to be a positive physical attribute.

Now we note epigrams on the general appearance of Martial's female personae. Bald, round women are not desirable. At 2.33, these are two of the three reasons Martial gives for avoiding kisses with Philaenis (calva, 2; rufa, 3). Women of medium size are preferable. Martial states this at 11.100: he wants neither a slender girl (amicam...subtilem, 1) nor one who weighs a thousand pounds (amicam...mille librarum, 5). Other brief references to general physical traits are at 11.101 (Thais is so thin) and 8.60 (Claudia is very tall).

As we examine the physical data provided concerning the female personae, it becomes clear that Martial spends no time describing positive attributes. Rather, he dedicates all relevant lines to various blemishes, and to vain attempts.⁶⁰

Martial's "Old" Female Personae

Some Romans lived to be very old: Cato the Elder lived to be eighty-five, Augustus seventy-six, Livia (his wife) eighty-six, and Tiberius (her son) seventy-nine. Others died at a very young age; infant death rates were high. In general, though, the average life expectancy of a Roman was considerably shorter than of a Westerner today: Cicero's daughter Tullia died at thirty, Tertius (named on an

⁶⁰ "Vain" has a double meaning: as she tries to better her appearance (she is vain), Martial first detects, then derides the persona (her efforts are in vain).

epitaph found at Naples) at thirty-one, Malius Firminius (named on an epitaph found at Rome) died at twenty-four.⁶¹ Thus, when ancient texts mention "old" women or men without mentioning their actual age, we must bear this difference in mind.⁶²

The older woman was grotesquely caricatured well before Martial's day. In Hellenic art dating from as far back as the sixth century B.C., the old woman's image is contrasted directly with the idealized younger, fertile, and attractive woman. In mimic and comic stage performances she appears as the stereotyped old hag. In Martial's treatment we see her as randy, undesirable, desirable, and in other, more miscellaneous lights.

Randy:

The old woman's lust is implied at 13.34, a motto on onions as aphrodisiacs:

Cum sit anus coniunx et sint tibi mortua membra,
nil aliud bulbis quam satur esse potes.

Since your wife is an old woman and
your member lifeless, all you can do

⁶¹ Shelton 93. Most of our information concerning life expectancy comes from epitaphs. Otherwise, see Cicero Epist. ad Fam. 12.46 and de sen., Pliny the Younger Epist. 5.16.1-7. At page 93, Shelton discusses how a short life expectancy affected Roman society: marrying earlier, having children at a younger age, and so on. See also B.W. Frier, "Roman Life Expectancy," HSCP LIIIV (1982) 213-51; M.K. Hopkins, "On the Probable Age Structure of the Roman Population," Population Studies XX (1966) 245-64; A.R. Burn, "A Study of the Expectation of Life in the Roman Empire," P&P IV (1953) 1-41.

⁶² See Sullivan (1979) 300. Other, more recent scholarship on older women includes B.D. Shaw, "The Cultural Meaning of Death : Age and Gender in the Roman Family," in The Family in Italy from Antiquity to the Present, New Haven: Yale University Press (ed.s R. Saller and D. Kertzer, 1991) 66-90; Old Age in Greek and Latin Literature, New York: State University of New York Press (ed.s T.M. Faulkner and J. de Luce, 1989); V. Rosivach, "Some Older Women in Latin Literature," CW 88.2 (1994) 107-117; W. Suder, "On Age Classifications in Roman Imperial Literature," CB LV (1978) 5-9; W. Suder, GERAS: Old Age in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Classified Bibliography, Wroclaw: PROFIL (1991).

is stuff yourself with onions.

The old wife must be randy: with onions the husband regains sexual potency, and can fulfill her needs.

Vetustilla -- "little old woman" -- appears at 3.93, and is given a detailed and visually effective description:

Cum tibi trecenti consules, Vetustilla,
et tres capilli quattuorque sint dentes,
pectus cicadae, crus colorque formicae;
rugosiore cum geras stola frontem
et araneorum cassibus pares mammas;
cum comparata rictibus tuis ora
Niliacus habeat corcodilus angusta,
meliusque ranae garrunt Ravennates
et Atrianus dulcius culix cantet,
videasque quantum noctuae vident mane,
et illud oleas quod viri capellarum,
et anatis habeas orthopygium macrae,
senemque Cynicum vincat osseus cunnus;
cum te lucerna balneator extincta
admittat inter bustuarias moechas;
cum bruma mensera sit tibi per Augustum
regelare nec te pestilenties possit.

You have 300 consuls, Vetustilla, and three hairs and four teeth, with the bosom of a grasshopper and the leg and complexion of an ant. You bear a forehead more wrinkled than a stole and breasts like spiders' webs. Compared with your jaws a Nile crocodile has a narrow mouth, the frogs of Ravenna chatter more agreeably, and the gnat of Atria sings sweeter. You see as well as owls in the morning, you smell like the husbands of the nanny goats, you have the rump of a lean duck and your bony cunt would defeat an aged Cynic. The bathman lets you in among the tomb-haunting whores only after putting out his lantern. For you winter goes on all through August and cannot defrost you even with a pestilence.⁶³

As old and unattractive as she is,⁶⁴ Vetustilla still wants a new man for a lover (virum...quaeris, 18-19). Although unexpected, this woman is not denied a new husband and more sex: she may marry and may be turned on -- but only by death personified, by the ruler of the Underworld, Orcus (23-26).

⁶³ 3.93.1-17.

⁶⁴ We are assuming that all of the points of comparison were considered unattractive; anyway, from what we know today of goats' smells, frogs' croaks, even saggy breasts, it seems highly unlikely that all of these would depict an attractive old woman.

The old woman in 7.75 is also lusty; she wants free sex (vis futui gratis, 1-2). Martial says this is thoroughly ridiculous (perridicula, 2) because she wants to give and not to give (vis dare nec dare vis, 2). That is, she wants to give sexual favours, but not give money. Is the old woman expected to have to pay for sex? Again, though, the aged persona is not denied having it.

At 10.67 Plutia (a pun on her name? plus: superior in years? or "moneybags" since she has to pay for sex?) has finally died. She has been buried alongside Melanthio where she itches with lust (prurit, 6). This may mean that her lust remained unfulfilled in her old age; she took it to the grave. If so, here we see a contrast to 3.93 and 7.75: this old woman is denied sex. The same thing happens at 10.90: Ligeia's yearnings are suitable for young women (decent puellas, 3), but she is older than old ("at tu iam nec anus potes videri", 4), and should not count herself as a desirable woman (7-8). If not denied sex, this old woman is advised against it.

The randy old woman appears, but is not always depicted in the same way. Sometimes she is allowed to have her needs satiated; otherwise, noticeably within the same book – 10, she is denied fulfillment. Martial may include the two perspectives in order to account for the old woman's equally two-fold desirability: some men found her attractive, but others did not.

Undesirable:

At 3.32 Matronia is turned down on account of her excessive age. Martial concedes that while he can have relations with an older woman (possum /...vetulam, 1-2), Matronia is not old, but dead (mortua, non vetula, 2). She is undesirable. (Her name may suggest this. If not, it might at least suggest that she

should not be yearning sexually, but be upright morally: a matrona.) We cannot presume the old woman has no desire; given the genre, a raunchy old woman can be expected readily. We can see that Martial has no desire for her.

The problem, however, is that, in 3.32, possim (1) and then possum (1, 3 [x 2]) are used elliptically; we cannot be absolutely sure that Matronia expects her man to fulfill any sexual role. J.N. Adams contends that, throughout the epigrams, "obscene" words are either omitted (as here), or replaced by another, less raunchy word. Passer, for example, might be substituted in place of mentula.⁶⁵ Frequent elliptical substitutions may be as Adams holds: a reflection of "greater acceptability in Roman society of riqué allusions to the male parts."⁶⁶ But speculations like this are dismissed here since our understanding of "obscene" may differ from that of a Roman male; we cannot introduce modern value-judgments upon ancient society. So, when we encounter epigrams 11.6 (where Hooper concludes that "the basic obscenity of the joke is painfully obvious"⁶⁷), 7.14 (where Nadeau contends that the last line of the poem is "puzzling" and "sits ill on the rest of the poem" if passer (4) is not referring to the penis⁶⁸), and 1.7 (where Nadeau again holds that Catullus' sparrow was read "indecently by Martial," and that "the point of the poem

⁶⁵ J.N. Adams, "A Type of Sexual Euphemism," Phoenix XXXV (1981) 120-128; see also Adams, The Latin Sexual Vocabulary, London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd. (1982). For discussions on passer see R.W. Hooper, "In Defence of Catullus' Dirty Sparrow," G&R XXXII (1985) 162-178; H.D. Jocelyn, "On Some Unnecessarily Indecent Interpretations of Catullus 2 & 3," AJP CI (1980) 421-441; Y. Nadeau, "Catullus' Sparrow, Martial, Juvenal, and Ovid," Latomus XLIII (1984) 861-68; and E.N. Genovese, "Symbolism in the Passer Poems," Maia XXVI (1974) 121-125.

⁶⁶ Adams (1981) 128

⁶⁷ Hooper 88

⁶⁸ Nadeau 864

is a comparison of the size of competing penises of Catullus and Stella⁶⁹), we must just look at the bare elements of each poem. From this, we can speculate or deduce, but not assuredly state or conclude anything (especially about Roman estimation).

To return to our examination of the undesirable old woman, we see that in 10.8 Martial does not want to marry Paula even though she wants to marry him: "nubere Paula cupit nobis, ego ducere Paulam / nolo" (1-2). His reason is that she is old (anus, 2). He would have wanted to, if she had been older (magis...anus, 2) - that is, if she were on the verge of dying. This poem rather contrasts 3.32 where the older-than-old woman is still undesirable. The point, however, is that it illustrates the general undesirability of the aged woman. Nonetheless we ought to investigate further what the attraction to the really old woman might be. Here it is because she will soon die.

Desirable:

We may not expect that any man would desire the old woman, but 10.8 suggests the possibility.⁷⁰ Nor is this the exception. At 3.76, Bassus is turned on by old women (1); he is not attracted to young girls (fastidis...puellas, 1). Rather than beauty, approaching death attracts him (moritura placet, 2). Martial seems to think Bassus crazy (furor, 3). Is he, though, since he might stand to gain financially from her death? Whatever the motivation, Bassus finds old women appealing.

Charidemus also runs after old hags, in 11.87 (sectaris anus, 2). His

⁶⁹ Nadeau 862

⁷⁰ See also Horace, Sat. 2.5; Penelope is the 'captator' figure here.

motivation is poverty (3). The old woman is desirable because Charidemus has no other choice; she might help him financially. Then at 9.80 the old woman has found a husband: Gellius. As with 11.87, she is attractive because of her money (Gellius is a hungry pauper: esuriens...pauper, 1).

It seems, then, that there is no genuine feeling or desire for the old woman. Rather, there is always an underlying motivation stemming from some need or other of the man. In general the old woman is unappealing. In specific cases she becomes desirable, but never in her own right.

Miscellaneous:

Now we glimpse at other, brief references to the older woman. At 1.100 Afra is old -- she may be called the "grandmama of mamas and dadas" (1-2). At 7.54 there is a brief mention of the saga (4): the wise old woman. At 9.29 Philaenis is now dead; she was very old. Martial hints at her having witchlike abilities: "quae nunc Thessalico lunam deducere rhombo?" (9). And at 10.39 Martial catches Lesbia lying about her date of birth (1-2). She is "truly" very old, said to have been molded from Prometheus' clay: "namque, ut tua saecula narrant, / ficta Prometheo diceris esse luto" (3-4).

Most of the appearances of the old female persona in Martial (roughly 70%) pertain to her sexual desirability, or lack of thereof. Her other appearances seem to have no collective theme or message. Nonetheless it is interesting, if not important, to read them. Of those poems relating to her desirability, we found that the old woman becomes appealing for a reason; money is the driving forces for this persona's attractiveness. The woman of wealth is our next topic.

Martial's "Rich" Female Personae

Evidence from inscriptions and literature reveals that there were women of wealth in Rome. Inscriptions on buildings and statues show that women's private wealth allowed them to have public roles within Roman society: as benefactors, patrons, and participants. Mostly, these inscriptions show this woman's generosity and affluence to be a "positive and praiseworthy phenomenon."⁷¹ In contrast, most literary evidence suggests that wealthy women inspired anger, and provoked laughter among certain of their male counterparts. Such disparity makes it hard to understand rich women, and so provide an accurate picture of them. Nevertheless, since women were able -- and welcome -- to gain good political standing by contributing to public events, the problem may have been in the rich man's acceptance of her success and power. This might explain the vast difference between her representation in public inscriptions and that in private literary circles.⁷²

In Martial we see the rich woman who is generous, and the man who is both greedy and anxious to access and/or own wealth from a woman (-- the woman

⁷¹ Information on the wealthy woman is taken from Women in the Classical World 360-68. Samples of inscriptions are included there. See also R. MacMullen, "Women in Public in the Roman Empire," Historia 29.2 (1980) 208-218.

⁷² On this topic, see Women in the Classical World, 272-273; Stereotypes of Women in Power New York: Greenwood Press (ed.s B. Garlick, S. Dixon and P. Allen, 1992); R. MacMullen, "Women's Power in the Principate," Klio LXVIII (1986) 434-445; Pomeroy 176-189 (esp.185-189); and J. Gardner & T. Wiedemann, The Roman Household: A Sourcebook, London: Routledge (1991) 6-7.

might not be rich, but he hopes to become rich off her).⁷³ We also see the woman having power when she has wealth, as well as other, more miscellaneous instances.

Generous woman:

At 4.61 we glimpse generous women. Pompulla has reportedly given Mancinus a cloak costing 10,000 sesterces: "milibus decem dixti / emptas lacemas munus esse Pompullae" (4-5). Bassa and Caelia have given him a genuine sardonyx (Sardian onyx greatly valued, especially for signet rings) which had three lines and two gemstones like sea waves around it: "sardonycha verum lineis ter cinctum / duasque similes fluctibus maris gemmas / dedisse Bassam Caeliamque iurasti" (6-8).⁷⁴

At 7.64 Martial mentions how Cinnamus became a knight because his patroness had given him the 400,000 sesterces needed for the rank: dominae munere factus eques (2). When the generous persona appears she is helping the financially challenged male. Her appearances are brief, and never the focal point of her epigram.

⁷³ Scholarship concerning this woman in Martial is, again, so varied. Some scholars assert that Martial feared and resented the rich woman, so much so that he wrote epigrams whose sole purpose was to defame her and portray her negatively: Sullivan (1979, 300; and in "Martial," Ramus XVI (1987) 186) holds that Martial "displays a patent fear." Others, such as Chaney (22), see these epigrams as depicting real-life rich women, rather than caricatures. It is not clear how or why she has decided this. And the rich woman is the focus of several other critiques; see especially P.A. Marino, "Women: Poorly Inferior or Richly Superior?" CB LXCIII (1971) 17-21.

⁷⁴ See Shackleton Bailey vol.i, p. 329.

Greedy man:

There are several sorts of greedy males: husband, lover, father, and owner. Male types do not appear here because I intend to examine them; rather, they are included because their avarice is always directed towards some sort of female type (wife, mistress, daughter, slave/employee). We noted (above) that a wealthy woman's generosity always extends to an unwealthy man; likewise, but in reverse, a man's greed always extends to a woman and her capacity to help him gain financially. Therefore, we note the male types in order to see the female types.

We see the avaricious husband at 5.32. Crispus has left nothing to his wife (non dedit uxori, 1) in his will (tabulis...supremis, 1). He spent everything while alive, giving only to himself (sibi, 2). Saleianus might be another greedy husband, at 2.65. His rich (dives, 4) wife, "Secundilla", has died (2). But this is not a sad day for Saleianus (he is only "saddish": tristiozem, 1); he says her death is a trivial matter (causa levis, 2). If his attachment to Secundilla were only a financial one and not an emotional or loving one, we would understand why he is not especially unhappy. Any sadness he feels may stem from the likelihood that he will no longer share her wealth.

We see the greedy lover at 4.28. Chloe is very generous to Lupercus, giving him scarlet [cloaks] (coccinas, 2), gowns (togam, 3), jewels (sardonychas...zmaragdus, 4), and coins (monetae, 5). Such gifts are not appreciated. Lupercus will still stand her up naked: nudam te statuet tuus Lupercus (8). Martial may be hinting that Lupercus will make a prostitute out of Chloe;⁷⁵ if so, his greed lies in his quest to earn money off her. Nuda may also

⁷⁵ For this and the following suggestion, see Shackleton Bailey vol.i, p.299. Also, the Luperci were naked dancers involved as priests in the rites and religion of Pan. We see,

mean "penniless"; Lupercus will make Chloe penniless as she gives him more and more presents.⁷⁶ Recall also 1.10, where Gemellus only desires and loves Maronilla because she has a cough which may kill her and possibly leave him financially secure.

We note the avaricious father at 6.8. A father's daughter is sought by many: 2 praetors, 4 tribunes, 7 barristers, and 10 poets (1-2). Without delay he gave the girl to Eulogus the auctioneer (an appropriate name?): "non moratus ille / praeconi dedit Eulogo puellam" (4-5). If Martial means the father gave her to Eulogus for him to auction her off, he is greedy for seeking the highest price, over any number of respectable men. If Martial means he gave her to Eulogus for marriage, he is greedy because being an auctioneer was more lucrative than respected (the father might gain financially from a wealthy son-in-law).

We see the greedy owner at 6.66. The auctioneer, Gellianus, tries to maximize his money when selling off a girl of low repute (famae non nimium bonae, 1). He kisses her several times in the hopes of raising the bidding (6-9). He fails miserably: somebody who bid 600 withdrew (sescentos...qui dabat negavit, 9).

All sorts of Martial's men are driven by avarice. We may understand the auctioneer whose job it is to raise the highest price; but it is less comprehensible when the husband or father chooses acquisition of wealth over the best interests of his girl. Men might be so anxious to gain wealth because, with money, they regain (and reassert) power. This would mean that the rich person has the control.

then, a contrast between Chloe and the naked, uncontrolled Lupercus; is he maybe trying to initiate her? Shackleton Bailey dismisses this, on the grounds that Lupercus is one of Martial's favourite names (ibid.).

⁷⁶ Contrast 6.75, where Martial does not want Porcia's gifts. Not all men are spongers.

Upon inspection of the rich women, this seems to hold true.

Rich woman's control:

At 8.12 Martial says he does not want to marry a rich woman because he does not want to be his wife's wife (uxori nubere nolo meae, 2).⁷⁷ The only way a wife can be equal to her husband, he says, is if she is below him (inferior, 3). The woman of wealth, then, is superior to her spouse. This happens at 10.69 also. Polla usurps the male role:

Custodes das, Polla, viro, non accipis ipsa.
hoc est uxorem ducere, Polla, virum.

You set men to watch your husband, Polla,
but you don't accept them yourself. This,
Polla, is taking your husband to wife.

Martial accentuates her masculinity by placing Polla next to vir each time he writes her name.

The rich wife's power is demonstrated at 12.97. Bassus has bought a young man with his rich (noble, cultivated, virtuous) wife's dowry (1-5). As a result of many a *rendez-vous* with the young man, Bassus can no longer perform sexually for his wife (6-9). He should have shame (sit...pudor, 10). His mentula (7) is not his any more (non est haec tua, 11); he sold it (vendidisti, 11) to his wife at marriage. The well-dowered woman buys control over her husband's actions.

It seems that whenever we see a female in power, it is as a wife. Her control is always over her husband.

⁷⁷ Nubere is the verb given when a woman weds a man. Ducere is given when a man takes (leads) a woman in marriage. Nubere has a more passive sense -- "to be wed" -- whereas ducere is more active -- "to marry".

Miscellaneous:

Other epigrams concerning the rich woman include 1.64, 2.32, and 10.41. Recall Fabulla's self-deception in 1.64 (*supra*): she is not really young, beautiful, or rich (because she boasts that she is). At 2.32 there is a brief mention of Laronia, who is a childless, rich old widow: orba est, dives, anus, vidua (6). And at 10.41 Proculeia has served her longstanding husband with divorce (1-2). Martial speculates that her action is motivated by a desire to save money. He is a praetor, who must fork out hundreds of thousands of sesterces for the Megalensian and plebeian games (4-7). If she divorces him now, she can save some of her own money.

Upon examination of the rich female personae in Martial, we note that the generous woman is never the subject of her own poem. Her counterpart, the greedy male, is often the focus as he sponges off his lover, wife, employee, or daughter. Money means power. Yet the only powerful woman we see is the wife; and two of her three appearances show her superior financial position to be negative (she is masculine, and is making her man feminine).

From powerful wives, and women seeking divorce, we move on to the next category: the married woman.

Martial's "Married" Female Personae

The image we have of the wife at Rome comes mostly from literature, but also from certain art forms. While art, such as sculpture, provides the visual image

of this woman,⁷⁸ literature provides a more characteristic image: it lays down certain rules and/or norms which are expected of a certain type of wife.⁷⁹

In the epigrams there are many married women. Some poems are serious dedications or commemorations while others are humorous and lighter in tone. We look at the mourning spouse (genuine and not), at jokes on killing the spouse, at couples (both suited and not), and at a few other, miscellaneous poems.

Mourning spouse:

We see the wife who has died as well as the wife who mourns (the husband has died); and we see some epigrams where the grieving is serious, and some where it is not.

Man has died. The sense of loss is **serious** at 7.40 where an honoured and respectable man has died (1-2). He was old: he lived to be almost 90 (prope ter senas vixit Olympiadas, 6). Even so, life seemed too short (7-8). His wife will not mourn his death, because she predeceased him (occidit illa prior, 5). Instead, and at last, he now joins her shade (coniugis umbris, 3). At 9.30 Nigrina's husband, Antistius Rusticus, has died (occidit, 1). As she carried her husband's bones back from Cappadocia, she complained that the journey was not long enough (4-5). She feels robbed and twice-widowed ("visa sibi est rapto bis viduata viro", 6) as she loses her cherished spouse. And at 12.52 Sempronia's beloved husband, Rufus,

⁷⁸ There is, for example, a statue of a Roman woman (from c.27 B.C.-14 A.D.) who is wearing a stola over her tunic. This identified her as a respectable married Roman woman. See Women in the Classical World 232-33. Tombstones throughout the Empire show hairpins, cosmetic jars, and combs standing next to wool baskets, spindles, and needles in order to "evoke the combination of personal beauty and domestic duty" required in a good wife, p.370.

⁷⁹ On this, see Kirkpatrick Sowden's thesis.

has died (1-4). Even so, their love story will always be remembered (5-14).

There is **no real grief** for Galla at 4.58. She cannot muster any tears for her dead husband; she is ashamed (pu^det te, 2) and does not want anybody to know. (Recall 1.33 where Gellia's mourning is not genuine; it is, however, over her father's death, not her husband's.)

Woman has died: 11.69 is a **serious** poem dedicated to the death of Lydia. It is in the form of an epitaph, and tells how Lydia was a noble huntress: fierce in the woods, and gentle at home (silvis aspera blanda domi, 2). The grieving husband is absent.

Paetus suffered **no real grief** when he lost his wife. This poem -- 5.37 -- is a serious one dedicated to the loss of Erotion.⁸⁰ Within it, however, we see Paetus telling Martial to get on with his life. Paetus has buried his wife, but he goes on living (et tamen vivo, 21); and his wife was well-known, proud, noble and rich (notam superbam nobilem locupletem, 22). Martial closes the epigram sarcastically:

quid esse nostro fortius potest Paeto?
ducentiens accepit et tamen vivit.

What can be braver than our Paetus? He
Has come into twenty millions, and yet he
goes on living!

So, Martial implies, Paetus never genuinely mourned his wife's death.

Upon inspection, the married woman has more of a role as mourner than as mourned. The seriously grieving husband is conspicuously absent. Given the genre we might expect not to see this man. Nor, then, should we expect to see the

⁸⁰ Other funeral epigrams to Erotion include 5.34, 5.37, and 10.61. See also poems to Canace (11.91) and Antulla (1.114 and 1.116).

seriously grieving wife; yet we do. Given the relatively few epigrams that deal with mourning, it is difficult even to speculate as to why this is so. We do notice, though, that Martial does not avoid the topic of death in the epigrams; nor does he avoid giving this issue a little humour.

Jokes on killing the spouse:

Martial jokes on wife as killed, and on wife as killer. First we examine wife as killed. Why might a husband want his wife dead? Perhaps she was a "bad" wife. In Roman society, those attributes considered negative, or unseemly in a wife -- infidelity, infertility, outspokenness, brazenness, drunkenness, lewdness, and others⁸¹ -- were in complete opposition to those considered essential for the good wife. Sempronia, for instance, was widely criticized for her independence, and for her public political role at Rome.⁸² The good wife led a private life, centred around her family. The bad wife did not devote adequate time and attention to her familial duties. In Martial, we do not see the husband's motivation; rather, we see only that he wants his wife dead.

Recall 8.81: if Gellia cannot survive without her pearls, let someone steal them! 4.24 is similar:

Omnes quas habuit, Fabiane, Lycoris amicas
extulit: uxori fiat amica meae.

Lycoris has buried every friend she
had, Fabianus. Let her make friends
with my wife.

⁸¹ See Shelton 298-99.

⁸² See Sallust, Consp. Cat. 25. Amidst his criticism, he does, however, admire her talents.

We note that Martial never directly wishes a woman dead; the reader infers this from the text. Martial cleverly avoids blame, and wittily ensures his readers' smiles.

At 10.16(15) we discover that Aper has pierced his dowered wife's heart with an arrow ("dotatae uxori cor harundine fixit acuta", 1). But it was only a game (sed...ludit Aper, 2). Well then, says Martial, Aper knows how to play (ludere novit Aper, 2)!⁸³ And at 10.43 we see that Phileros had buried his seventh wife (septima...uxor) on his land (1). Nobody, Martial asserts, gets a better return for his land ("plus nulli, Phileros, quam tibi reddit ager, 2)! Again, then, Martial avoids blatant death wishes.

Now we examine wife as killer. At 9.15 Chloe has buried seven husbands. On each tomb the "murderess" (scelerata, 1) wrote that she did it ('se fecisse', 2). Martial asks "What could be plainer?" (quid pote simplicius? 2). Presumably the words on the actual grave were Chloe, feci (I, Chloe, did it). Martial makes a pun on this: Chloe, feci can mean that she killed the man, or that she made the tomb and buried her husband. Whereas the latter is probably the intended meaning, Martial uses the former to introduce humour.⁸⁴ When the wife is killer, we notice that there are no implied death wishes; rather the wife has become notorious for

⁸³ Interestingly, Aper means "wild boar". This, again, is a clue that names are sometimes crafted as literary word-plays; this in turn opens up the question of the level of (un)reality in the epigrams.

⁸⁴ At 9.95 Martial jokes, saying that a wife has changed her husband, Athenagoras, from Alfius to Olfius: "Alfius ante fuit, coepit nunc Olfius esse" (1). Shackleton Bailey (vol.ii, p.314) notes the difficulty in deciphering what this poem means; ultimately he adheres to Calerdini's suggestion that Olfius originates from olfacere (to smell) and comes to mean cunnilingus. Alternatively, it might be that Athenagoras' wife has brought him to his end: from Alpha (A: Alphius) to Omega (Ω: Olfius). If so, she has, in essence, killed him; this poem might then be added to examples where the wife kills her husband. Although unlikely (because the "o" in Olfius would be short, therefore not Ω), this idea deserves mentioning.

having already accomplished the deed.

Sometimes both husband and wife are notorious. At 9.78 Galla has married Picentius after burying seven husbands (1-2). Martial suspects she wants to follow her men (sequi vult, puto, Galla viros, 2). Picentius, like Galla, is a poisoner. Who will kill whom first? Fabius and Chrestilla, of 8.43, are similar:

Effert uxores Fabius, Chrestilla maritos,
funereamque toris quassant uterque facem.
victores committe, Venus: quos iste manebit
exitus. una duos ut Libitina ferat.

Fabius buries his wives, Chrestilla her husbands; each of them brandishes a funeral torch over the marriage bed. Venus, match the winners; the end awaiting them will be one bier to carry the pair.

Again, there is no death wish, but death seems inevitable. One will kill the other, or they will die together. It seems that the wittier and more humorous epigrams are those where the husband wishes his wife dead. It is noticeable that most of the epigrams concerning the deliberate death of a spouse (5 out of 8) are concentrated in only two books: 9 and 10. Perhaps Martial was feeling bitter when he wrote these books. He may have planned to concentrate spouse-killing jokes. It is probably by chance. We cannot know; we can only notice.

Couples:

In 8.43 supra, Fabius and Chrestilla are well-suited. In contrast we find a surprisingly ill-suited couple at 8.35: a rotten wife (uxor pessima, 2) and a rotten husband (pessimus maritus, 2) are alike and similar (similes paresque, 1), yet not good together (miror non bene convenire vobis, 3).

Generally, Martial writes about well-suited couples. He includes several epigrams of serious praise of married couples. 10.38 is a commemoration of 15

years of happy married life between Sulpicia and Calenus, who are blissfully devoted to one another. Calenus is deeply in love with Sulpicia: he counts only his married days as his life (10-11), and he would choose a single day with her over long life (13-14).⁸⁵ Also, 4.13 Claudia Peregrina and Pudens are a perfect match (1-6). They are happy and in love, and hopefully always will be:

diligat illa senem quondam, sed et ipsa marito
tum quoque, cum fuerit, non videatur anus.

Let her love him when one day he is
old; but for her part, let her not seem
old to her husband, even when old
she is.

In these epigrams we see the male whose love and feeling are genuine. His appearance in Graeco-Roman literature is not rare, whether he is devoted to a Greek literary figure or a real-life Roman matrona, to a mistress or a wife: in many poems, Catullus' poetic persona dedicates all sorts of time and emotion to Lesbia; Virgil's Aeneas delays his destiny of founding Rome because he is so in love with Dido; and in Terence's Eunuchus (The Eunuch), Phaedria's younger brother, Chaerea, is so desperately in love with the girl given to Thais, a courtesan, that he dresses up as a eunuch so that he can get into the brothel, and can seduce the girl.⁸⁶ Tomb inscriptions, too, show that husbands cherished, loved, and were

⁸⁵ For another reference to happy couples, see Pliny (Ep. 4.19.2-4) who describes how happy he is with his wife, Calpurnia. Generally, though, Roman marriage, at least in the elite class, seems to have been more of a business deal, or practical arrangement, than a joining of two people in love. Pliny (Ep. 1.10; 1.14; 6.26; 6.32) writes about the qualities to look for in a husband: good family, good education, enough money, good character, good social standing. Livy (38.57.5-8) tells how Scipio publicly betrothed his daughter to Gracchus without the consent of either his daughter, or his wife. See J.F. Gardner 31-67; and Shelton, 37-58.

⁸⁶ Although literary conventions are significantly different for Greek and Roman literature, as well as for literary figures and real-life people, we see nonetheless that the devoted male pervades ancient writings.

faithful to, their wives.⁸⁷

Elsewhere in Martial, other celebrations of good couples focus on the devoted wife. At 4.75 Nigrina rejoices in her husband (felix...marito, 1). He is welcomed as her partner and partaker (of her father's wealth): "te patrios miscere iuvat cum coniuge census, / gaudentem socio participique viro" (3-4). She is the prime glory among Latin brides, and surpasses the fame even of Evadne and Alcestis (5-6).⁸⁸

Arria is ultimately devoted, at 1.13:

Casta suo gladium cum traderet Arria Paeto,
quem de visceribus strinxerat ipsa suis,
"Si qua fides, vulnus quod feci non dolet," inquit
"sed tu quod facies, hoc mihi, Paete, dolet."

When virtuous Arria was handing her Paetus the sword she had drawn from her own flesh, she said: "I swear the wound I have dealt does not hurt, but the wound you will deal, Paetus, *that* hurts me."

Since it is the first word of the poem, casta is emphasized; this is Arria's most important and valuable quality.⁸⁹ Compare 1.42, where Porcia looks to kill herself upon hearing the fate of her husband Brutus (coniugis...fatum...Bruti, 1). She

⁸⁷ For example, from the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum [CIL 1.2.1221 (ILS 7472)], we read: "Lucius Aurelius Hermia, freedman of Lucius, a butcher on the Viminal. She who preceded me in death was my one and only wife, chaste in body, with a loving spirit, she lived faithful to her faithful husband, always optimistic, even in bitter times, she never shirked her duties." See also Shelton 44-47. Remember that the problem with inscriptions is that they may not be entirely accurate; rather, they provide a (male-authored) ideal. As long as we are aware of this, we may use them as primary evidence; but we must use them with caution.

⁸⁸ The cynic might think she is only so perfect because she has shared her wealth...Compare 12.49: Postumilla has put Linus in charge of her whole establishment.

⁸⁹ Pliny (Epist. 3.16.3-6) tells this same story, of Arria killing herself. Caecina Paetus, her husband, was ordered by the emperor Claudius in 42 A.D. to kill himself (probably so as to save public execution, and to avoid embarrassing his family). When he hesitated, Arria took the sword; for her actions, and her loyalty to her husband, Arria was praised. See Shelton 296.

drinks burning embers with keen mouth: ardentis avido bibit ore favillas (5). Both Arria and Porcia are honoured for displaying ultimate devotion to their husbands.

Polla is devoted to her husband Lucan, even after his death. 7.21 and 7.23 commemorate his birth and death. Hopefully Polla will always remember and honour him, and he will know it: "tu, Polla, maritum / saepe colas et se sentiat ille coli" (7.23.3-4).

As we examine poems on couples, we see some ill-suited, more well-suited, spouses. Some husbands are devoted; mostly, a marriage is honoured when the wife displays great commitment to her husband.

Miscellaneous:

Other brief references to married females appear. At 1.74 Paula's husband used to be her lover (moechus erat, 1; vir est, 2). Now that they are married, she cannot turn him down (2). At 2.54 Linus' sharp and malicious wife (nasutius...maligniusque, 5) has confirmed her suspicions about her husband, by having a eunuch watch him (custodem tibi quae dedit spadonem, 4).

At 2.92 Martial ironically bids farewell to his "wife" (valebis uxor, 3) because he has been granted the Right of Three Children (ius trium natorum) as a reward for his poetry. Many scholars have written on Martial's marital status, and have tried to decipher how true the epigrams addressed to his "wife" really are.⁹⁰ Similarly, many have attempted to discover if Martial were indeed a father who

⁹⁰ See L. Ascher, "Was Martial Really Unmarried?" *CW LXX* (1977) 441-444; J.P. Sullivan, "Was Martial Really Married? A Reply," *CW LXXII* (1978-9) 238-239; and H.C. Schnur, "Again: Was Martial Really Married?" *CW LXXII* (1978) 98-99.

deserved the Right of Three Children.⁹¹ Ultimately we cannot truly know if Martial were either married or a father; the point of noting 2.92 here is to see another reference to a married female (not to decide whether she is fictional or not).

At 7.58 Galla keeps marrying effeminate men (cinaedis, 1; mollem maritum, 5). Martial advises her to find a "real" man (vero...viro, 10) who is husky, hairy, and gruff (hirsutum et dura rusticitate truce[m], 8). And at 9.10(5) Paula is wise to want to marry Priscus (1). Priscus is wise not to want to marry Paula (2).

Epigrams showing the married female persona appear throughout Martial's collection of verses. We see serious and light poems where she is mourning and being mourned, or killing and being killed. In some epigrams she is the devoted and honoured wife; in others, she has a devoted husband.

Up to this point we have explored and examined several categories of female personae: the chaste, beautiful, physical, old, rich, and married woman-types. Next we look at the category of the sexual female persona in Martial.

⁹¹ See E.J. Kenney, "Erotion Again," G&R II (1964) 77-81; D. Daube, "Martial: Father of Three?" AJAH I (1976) 145-147; and A.A. Bell, "Martial's Daughter?" CW LXXVIII (1984) 21-24. On the Right of Three Children, see Gardner, 20 ff.

CHAPTER 4

Martial's "Sexual" Female Personae

This category is divided into four sections because of its size. Each section is given separate investigation. The four sections are: lusty woman, adulteress, prostitute, and same-sex oriented woman. We begin with the lusty female persona.

First we restate the importance of examining Martial's epigrams with caution. We noted that Martial's "advice" might not necessarily represent his own, personal opinions, nor necessarily those of a collective, male, Roman norm. So too, with the sexual poems, we must not try to retrieve Martial's own views, nor suppose we ever can. This basic point will be covered more extensively at the end, when we examine "the poet's choice".

The Lusty Woman

We see the sexually potent woman as easy, as neither too easy nor too prim, as a tease, as sex-starved yet rejected, as a tramp; we see epigrams on the *fellatrix*, on women who are ready to experiment, and on women who neglect their familial duty in a quest for more sex.⁹²

The **easy woman** appears at 9.32: Martial wants an easy girl (*facilis*, 1) --

⁹² Since many of the "lusty" personae are adulteresses or prostitutes, there is some overlap; some poems, that is, may apply to one or more category. Women are included under "lusty" because their sexual potency is what Martial chooses to focus on.

one who is ready to take on three men at once (pariter sufficit una tribus, 4), not one who talks big and demands money ("poscentem nummos et grandia verba sonantem", 5). He gets what he wants, at 9.67. Here Martial has enjoyed a wanton girl (lascivam...puellam, 1) all night. Curiously, despite all the "rather indecent" (improbius, 5) things she does willingly (3-6), Martial describes her as pura (7). Similarly, at 12.65 Phyllis has given herself generously to Martial throughout the night (1-2). Rather than describing her moral laxity, he describes her as formosa (1), and considers what to buy her (3-6). She asks for a supply of wine (amphoram vini, 9). From these poems we see that the easy persona is not depicted negatively; rather she is desirable, undefiled, and deserving of gifts.

It is the woman who is **neither too easy nor too prim** who is ideal. At 11.104, Martial's wife is very different from him. He likes to drink wine, be naked, and make love by lamplight; she likes to drink water, pile on lots of clothes, and do it in the dark:

me iucunda iuvant tractae per pocula noctes:
 tu properas pota surgere tristis aqua.
 tu tenebris gaudes: me ludere teste lucerna
 et iuvat admissa rumpere luce latus.
 fascia te tunicaeque obscuraque pallia celant:
 at mihi nulla satis nuda puella iacet.
 basia me capiunt blandas imitata columbas:
 tu mihi das aviae qualia mane soles.

I like nights drawn out by cups that cheer: you drink water and hasten sour-faced from the table. You love the dark: I prefer to sport with a lamp for witness and to admit the daylight when I'm bursting my loins. You hide yourself with a brassiere and a tunic and an obscuring robe: but no girl lies naked enough for me. I am captivated by kisses that copy blandishing doves: you give me such as you give ⁹³ your grandmother of a morning.

⁹³ 11.104.3-10.

She is too uptight and must do as he does or leave: "uxor, vade foras aut moribus utere nostris" (1). Eventually Martial concedes a little; she may be a Lucretia (chaste) by day, but he wants a Lais (easy) by night: "Lucretia toto / sis licet usque die: Laida nocte volo" (21-22). Neither one is ideal all the time, but a little of each is. Martial states this at 1.57: the sort of girl he wants would be medium (medium, 3) -- between easy and hard-to-get (nolo nimis facilem difficilemque nimis, 2).⁹⁴ 11.60 has a similar theme: Phlogis is lusty and able to turn on any man (3-6); Chione is more beautiful (pulchrior, 2), but lacks Phlogis' itch (7-8). Martial describes the perfect situation:

Exorare, dei, si vos tam magna liceret
 et bona velletis tam pretiosa dare,
 hoc quod habet Chione corpus faceretis haberet
 ut Phlogis, et Chione quod Phlogis ulcus habet.

Ye gods, if it were permitted to win
 from you so great a petition and you
 were minded to grant boons so
 precious, you would make Phlogis
 have the body that Chione has and
 Chione the itch that Phlogis has.⁹⁵

Again, then, a woman too lusty or too prim is not the most desirable; a woman whose behaviour fluctuates between the two is perfect.

The **tease** contrasts with both the easy woman (because she does not do the deed) and the prudish woman (because she does not shun her sexuality). We see the tease at 2.25: Galla promises but never gives (das numquam, semper promittis, 1). Martial says that she should just say no rather than continue to deceive him (2). See also 4.22 where the new bride, Cleopatra, jumps into a clear

⁹⁴ This contrasts 9.32 (supra); if we try to take Martial at his word, we become rapidly confused. "Hard-to-get" is sometimes advantageous: it makes the woman more desirable; see 1.73 where Maecilianus' wife is more desired once under lock-and-key.

⁹⁵ 11.60.9-12. Adams (1982) 41 observes here a deliberate pun: the names resemble the sex-drives. Phlogis' name suggests burning desire (Φλόξ, flame), while Chione is snow white (Χιὼν).

pool in order to avoid the embrace of her new husband (1-3). We suspect that her modesty is feigned, since the water into which she dives is clear (perspicuae, 8).⁹⁶ Further, when her husband sees her through the water, in he leaps to snatch some kisses (7-8). Epigram 14.203 shows the tease as well:

Puella Gaditana: Girl from Gades

Tam tremulum crisat, tam blandum prurit, ut ipsum
masturbatorem fecerit Hippolytum.

Her waggles are so tremulous, her
itch so seductive that she would
make a masturbator out of Hippolytus
himself.

These tempting women appear too infrequently to make any definite deductions;⁹⁷ it seems, though, that Martial is not consistently frustrated by the tease, nor is he always taken by her.

We saw that Martial is taken by easy women, although sometimes they are **rejected**. See 10.22 where Martial wears a bandaid on his chin (spleniato...mento, 1) and paints white lead over his lips (alba pictus...labra cerussa, 2) to avoid kissing Philaenis. He even tells her he does not want to kiss her: basiare te nolo (2). At 11.23 Martial says he will marry Sila even though he does not want to (Silam nulla ducere lege volo, 2), but there are many conditions (5-14), one of which is that he will not sleep with her ("nec futuam quamvis prima te nocte maritus / communis tecum nec mihi lectus erit", 5-6). Sila is essentially rejected.

Rejection of this sort can make the woman sex-starved. At 11.81 Aegle cannot be sexually satisfied by either of the two men in bed with her: one

⁹⁶ See N.M. Kay, Martial Book XI: A Commentary, London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd. (1985) 229. For opposing views see B. Baldwin, "Aquatic Sex," LCM VI (1981) 25.

⁹⁷ She appears so rarely perhaps because (again – that is, as with the truly chaste woman) Martial's readers had a generally low interest in her.

(Dindymus the eunuch, spado, 1) is too weak, the other is too old: "viribus hic, operi non est hic utilis" (4). She begs (supplex illa rogat, 5) for the one to become young, or for the other to become a man (hunc iuvenem facias, hunc...virum, 6).⁹⁸ The sex-starved woman becomes desperate. At 10.75 Galla lowers herself⁹⁹ -- and her fee (from 20,000 to 2,000 to 400 to 100 sesterces, 1-11), until eventually she says she will give favours for free (dat gratis, 14) and even offers to *pay* (ultra dat mihi Galla, 14)! Similarly, at 11.62 Lesbia swears she has never been screwed for free (gratis numquam esse fututam, 1). It's true (verum est, 2), says Martial, because when she wants her lust fulfilled, *she* pays (cum futui vult, numerare solet, 2). For Martial's sex-crazed women, desperate needs do call for desperate measures.

In contrast to the sex-starved woman is the **tramp**. We see her at 6.67: Caelia has eunuchs (eunuchos habeat, 1) -- she wants to have lots of sex, but not children (vult futui...nec parere, 2). At 2.49 Telesina is a tramp (moecha est, 2); for this reason Martial does not want to marry her (uxorem nolo Telesinam ducere, 1). Then at 7.91 there is a brief mention of wanton girls (lascivis...puellis, 3). And at 12.91 Magulla seems to be a tramp: she shares a couch (lectulus, 2) and a male concubine (exoletus, 2) with her husband (cum viro, 1). As with the tease, the tramp's appearances are too infrequent and varying to make any definite

⁹⁸ 7.14 and 11.40 are quite similar thematically. In 7.14 Martial's girl has lost her source of pleasure (a young boy), and in 11.40 Glycera has been sexually rejected by Lupercus for a whole month.

⁹⁹ We know she is "lowering" herself because of inferius...potuit descendere (13). We do not know whether this refers to the lowering of her moral character, or to the lowering of her (symbolic) prices. It seems likely that both concepts are encompassed within the line: there is a certain negativity associated with reduction of chargeable fee. (Such negativity, then, is not a modern imposition: it seems that similar views existed at Rome in the first century.)

deductions.

Counted amongst these tramps, perhaps, is the *fellatrix*. At 4.84 no one in the community, nor in the whole of Rome can say he has done Thais (1-2), not because she is chaste (casta, 4), but because she only sucks: fellat (4). At 2.50 we see Lesbia as *fellatrix*:

quod fellas et aquam potas nil, Lesbia, peccas.
qua tibi parte opus est, Lesbia, sumis aquam.

You suck and drink water, Lesbia.
Nothing wrong with that. You take
water where it's needed, Lesbia.

Martial does not depict the *fellatrix* in a negative way. In fact, at 9.40 he shows approval for this woman-type. Here, Philaenis promises to lick (lingeret) Diodorus upon his return (1-5). Despite a wrecked ship he makes it home (6-8). How slow he was, says Martial, who would have rushed home to cash in on such a promise right away: "o tardus nimis et piger maritus! / hoc in litore si puella votum / fecisset mea, protinus redissem"!¹⁰⁰

At 9.40, the girl is **eager to please** her man sexually. Such zeal is also seen at 11.43: the wife who has caught her husband with a boy (in puero, 1) points out that she has an arse too (1-2). But men have always taken a boy lover, despite loving their wives (3-10). So the wife should not give masculine names (mascula nomina, 9) to her "belongings" (rebus, 9). Another eager wife appears at 12.96; this woman is willing to do something she should not do (7-8) -- it is a boy's job. Boys give the husband (faithful though he is) what the wife cannot (willing though she is); in fact, Martial says, thanks to them, there is no "other" woman ("hi faciunt

¹⁰⁰ Phyllis may be a *fellatrix* at 10.81; but there are complications with this poem, so it is not included in this examination. For more information, see Shackleton Bailey's note in Appendix B at the end of vol.iii.

ut sis femina sola viro", 6). Again, Martial says that wives and women should know their limitations: "scire suos fines matrona et femina debet" (11).¹⁰¹

In her quest for increased sexual activity, the lusty woman (Galla in 2.34, for example) sometimes neglects her maternal duty:

Cum placeat Phileros tota tibi dote redemptus,
tres pateris natos, Galla, perire fame.

.....
perpetuam di te faciunt Philerotis amicam,
o mater, qua nec Pontia deterior.

While Phileros, whom you bought with your entire dowry, Galla, gives you pleasure, you let your three children starve to death....May the gods make you Phileros' mistress for ever and a day, mother no better than Pontia herself.¹⁰²

By placing Galla between her children (natos) and their suffering (perire fame) Martial emphasizes the mother's neglect, and responsibility.

Martial's portrayal of the sexually potent female persona is never especially negative, for even the negligent mother is not overly chastized. The *fellatrix* is depicted in a positive way; like the easy woman, she is desirable rather than immoral. Most desirable is the woman who combines modesty with lust. She who is too eager to please her husband is not perfect, however; she ought to know her wifely limits, and fulfill her familial duty. Therefore, we see that, along with a variety of lusty women, Martial provides a number of differing reactions to each (some of which may surprise the modern reader).

¹⁰¹ Compare these poems with 14.205: Martial mentions that, when a husband has a smooth boy, no woman can please him. Also note 11.78: Victor is soon to be married; he has to learn first how to sleep with a woman.

¹⁰² 2.34.1-2, 5-6. Pontia killed her two young sons, by poisoning them. See 4.43.5, and 6.75; see also Shackleton Bailey vol.i, p.159.

The Adulteress

If one is to believe the poets, adultery was rife at Rome. For instance, Ovid (Ars Am. 1.135-63; and 3.57-61) recommends, and advises on how to succeed at, adultery; Catullus (many poems, especially 5 and 51) tells of his affair with "Lesbia" (Clodia); and Seneca (Consol. 16.3-5) writes to his mother about the immorality and infidelity seen in women at Rome. This cannot be altogether surprising since marriages were, for the most part, arranged; also, women married very young, often to men who were quite superior to them in age.¹⁰³ Nonetheless, adultery remained a serious offence at Rome. Augustus issued the lex de adulteriis, part of the larger lex Iulia, around 18 B.C. (later amended, around 9 A.D., as the lex Papia Poppaea). The law was not the same for men as for women. A woman could not bring charges against her unfaithful husband, except if her father or guardian prosecuted him; she was automatically guilty if she had had a sexual liaison with any man other than her husband, and she could not then remarry.¹⁰⁴ A man, however, could always (indeed, was penalized if he failed to) bring charges against his wife, and he was only found guilty if he had had a sexual liaison with a married woman, a virtuous single girl, a widow, or a younger male.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ See Shelton 50-58; see also Women in the Classical World 299-302. Note as well: M. McDonnell, "Divorce initiated by Women in Rome," AJAH 8.1 (1983) 54-80 for historical reality versus the mis-leading law codes; D. Noy, "Matchmakers and Marriage-Markets in Antiquity," CV XXXIV (1990) 375-400, for information on arranged marriages; S. Treggiari, "Putting the Bride to Bed," CV 38.3 (1994) 311-331; and A. Richlin, "Approaches to the Sources on Adultery at Rome," Women's Studies VIII (1981) 225-250, who cautions on the inference of "rife" adultery; see also Pomeroy 159-160.

¹⁰⁴ See Gardner 57 and 127-131

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

Naturally, perhaps inevitably, the satirists and epigrammatists of contemporary Rome took up, and expounded upon, the theme of adultery. More often than not, the adulterous woman was the focus: a hot topic.

In Martial, so many epigrams deal with or mention the adulteress that she almost deserves a separate category. Recall the earlier observation that, because of the even distribution of poems on this persona throughout the entire collection, Martial may be preoccupied with the infidelle. Within the present examination we note epigrams on the man who cheats with another's wife, the wife who has affairs, the husband who seeks revenge on his wife's lover, and the denial of an affair. Many of these poems concern the husband. This is expected since a wife's unfaithful actions affect her husband directly. Without marriage there is no adultery.

We begin by looking at the mistress. Although not an adulteress per se, she is included here because, through her affairs with men, she becomes directly involved with marriage: she either prevents a man from getting married, or her affair means his extramarital one.¹⁰⁶

Mistress

¹⁰⁶ The idea of cheating mistress is a modern construction. In Roman society the Roman mistress -- as 'concubine' -- carried no stigma; she was often in a monogamous, faithful relationship but was unable to form a legally recognizable marriage because her social status was lower than that of her man. (See B.M. Rawson, "Roman Concubinage," *TAPA CIV* (1974) 279-304; and S. Treggiari, "Lower Class Women in the Roman Economy," *Florilegium I* (1979) 65-73.) Nonetheless, the mistress appears in Martial's epigrams (not simply as concubine) and must not be excluded in the examination of Martial's female personae. Poems involving/showing her are not numerous enough to warrant a separate category; since her affairs relate mostly to marital infidelity, we include her here.

There is the man whose slavegirl becomes his mistress.¹⁰⁷ At 1.84 Quirinalis does not want a wife, but he wants to have sons (1-2). He has discovered how this is possible: he screws (fuit, 3) slavegirls and so fills urban and rural homes with slavish knights (equitibus vernis, 4). Quirinalis sleeps with many girls.

In contrast there is the man who chooses only one mistress. This is the case at 6.71:

Edere lascivos ad Baetica crumata gestus
 et Gaditanis ludere docta modis,
 tendere quae tremulum Pelian Hecubaeque maritum
 posset ad Hectoreos sollicitare rogos,
 urit et excruciat dominum Telethusa priorem:
 vendidit ancillam, nunc redimit dominam.

Skilled to match wanton gestures to
 Baetic airs and dance to the
 measures of Gades, able to stretch
 doddering Pelias and stir Hecuba's
 husband at Hector's pyre, Telethusa
 burns and torments her former
 master. He sold a slavegirl; now he
 buys her back as mistress of his
 house.

She becomes his domina (6), not simply his amica. She controls him.

Men do not necessarily take slavegirls as their mistresses. Several general references to a man and his mistress appear. At 3.69 (part has been seen already) an old man with a mistress should read Martial's naughty verses ("haec [verba] senior, sed quem torquet amica, legat", 6). See also 2.62 where Labienus shaves most of his body for his female lover (hoc praestas, Labiene, tuae...amicae, 3). Other men go to great lengths to please their mistresses. At 9.2 Lupus is very poor to his friends, but very generous to his girl ("pauper amicitiae cum sis, Lupe, non es amicae", 1). He shares the finest food and drink with her (3-6), he buys her jewellery (9), and has a litter transport her about town (11), while he feeds cheap

¹⁰⁷ For the sexually exploitive side of female slavery, see K.R. Bradley, Slaves and Masters in the Roman Empire, New York: Oxford University Press (1987); see also A.

food and poisonous wine to his friends. At 10.29 Sextilianus uses gifts meant for Martial as gifts for his mistress. He risks friendship with Martial for his girl when he gives her a dish (lancem, 1) and a green dinner suit (prasina...synthesis...toga, 4) bought originally for Martial.

Sometimes the mistress appears as the subject. At 11.49(50) Phyllis is the target as she ruins Martial; he denies her nothing so she should do the same ("nil tibi, Phylli, nego; nil mihi, Phylli, nega", 12). More often than not, though, the mistress is not the focus of the poem; her appearance is brief and incidental. We glimpse the despoiler-mistress (spoliatricem, 5) whose door is permanently open (ianua...semper aperta, 6) at 4.29. At 14.6 Martial tells that three-leaved tablets are no paltry gift when the mistress writes that she is coming (1-2). And at 14.8 we discover that a girl knows that Vitellian tablets are used for writing to mistresses (they can also be used for asking for money):

Vitelliani: Vitellian tablets

Nondum legerit hos licet puella,
novit quid cupiant Vitelliani.

Although she may not have read them yet, a girl
knows what Vitellian tablets want.

From a brief look at the mistress in Martial's epigrams we note that, as with Roman society in general, there is no negative association with this woman-type.¹⁰⁸

Watson, Roman Slave Law, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press (1987).

¹⁰⁸ Note: this is "in general", and is therefore not always applicable. For instance, sometimes there was social negative association, such as in Cicero's defamation (demolition) of Clodia (then a widow) for her extramarital liaisons, or if the woman were married to somebody else; see also Plutarch's description of the immoral women in Cato's family (Cato the Younger, 24.4). One might possibly argue that any negative association was of a more ethical, rather than social, nature; such a line of examination, however, is not discussed within the scope of this paper (hence "in general"). On this topic, see Ellison-Gillis' thesis.

Man cheats with another's wife

This occurs at 2.60 and 4.66. At 2.60 Hyllus screws (futuis, 2) the wife of an armed tribune (armati...tribuni, 1), and is seemingly unaware of the seriousness of his actions for he could face castration (3). At 4.66, when Linus' organ grows warm from wine (12), he gets together either with his bailiff's wife or with a rugged foreman's: "vilica vel duri compressa est nupta coloni" (11). Although this is not the focus of the poem, we do observe infidelity.

Even Martial's girl falls prey: at 3.96 Gargilianus licks (lingis, 1) Martial's puella, and talks to her as a lover (garris quasi moechus, 2). Again, there is nothing particularly negative here when a man cheats with some other man's wife.¹⁰⁹

Wife cheats

In the epigrams the cheating of a wife is often blatant. Sometimes she leaves her husband, sometimes she cheats by sleeping with her slave.

The wife's affair is obvious at 6.22:

Quod nubis, Proculina, concubino
et, moechum modo, nunc facis maritum,
ne lex Iulia te notare possit:
non nubis, sed fateris.

You are marrying your lover,
Proculina, and making the adulterer of
yesterday your husband so that the
Julian law can't put a mark against
you. That's not a marriage, Proculina,
it's a confession.

The final fateris really stings. Martial emphasizes Proculina's blatant abuse of the system.

¹⁰⁹ A woman may even be more attractive simply as somebody's wife; see 3.70.3-4.

At 12.93 the husband is a fool (morio, 7) for not noticing his wife's cheating. Everybody else must then be aware that Labulla ("little lips"?) kisses her lover in front of her husband (coram coniuge, 2). She kisses her small fool (3); then her lover snatches him up, smothers him with more kisses, and sends him back to Labulla (4-6).

No wife could be more blatant than Marulla in 6.39. She has seven children, none of whom is her husband Cinna's.

Pater ex Marulla, Cinna, factus es septem
 non liberorum: namque nec tuus quisquam
 nec est amici filiusve vicini,
 sed in grabatis tegetibusque concepti
 materna produnt capitibus suis furta.
 hic qui retorto crine Maurus incedit
 subolem fatetur esse se coci Santrae.
 at ille sima nare, turgidis labris
 ipsa est imago Pannychi palestritae.
 pistoris esse tertium quis ignorat,
 quicumque lippum novit et videt Damam?
 quartus cinaeda fronte, candido voltu
 ex concubino natus est tibi Lygdo:
 percide, si vis, filium: nefas non est.
 hunc vero acuto capite et auribus longis,
 quae sic moventur ut solent asellorum,
 quis morionis filium negat Cyrtae?
 duae sorores, illa nigra et haec rufa,
 Croti choraulae vilicique sunt Carpi.
 iam Niobidarum grex tibi foret plenus
 si spado Coresus Dindymusque non esset.

By Marulla, Cinna, you have been made the father of seven -- not children, for not one of them is yours, nor yet a friend's, or a neighbor's son; but conceived on truckle beds and mats, they reveal their mother's escapades by their heads. This one, that stalks like a Moor with curly hair, confesses himself the off-spring of Santra the cook. But that one, with flat nostrils and blubber lips, is the very image of Panychus the wrestling coach. Who but knows that the third is the baker's, if he knows and sees bleary-eyed Dama? The fourth, with catamite's brow and pale complexion, was born to you from your favorite Lygdus. Sodomize your son, if you like; no sin in that. Ah, but this one with the pointed head and long ears that move like donkeys' are wont to do, who denies that he is the son of Cyrtia the natural? Two sisters, one black, the other red, are Crotus the flautist's and Carpus the bailiff's. You would now have a troop as numerous as Niobe's,¹¹⁰ if Croesus and Dindymus had not been eunuchs.

¹¹⁰ Niobe apparently had 9 sons and 9 daughters. According to Shackleton Bailey (vol.ii, 31) Martial has mistakenly converted this into 9 children of both sexes. The point is that Marulla has had so many children. (Niobe boasted that she was equal to Leto, so Leto's children -- Apollo and Artemis -- killed all of Niobe's children.)

This poem contrasts with 1.84 (above): Martial takes only five lines to reveal that Quirinalis sleeps with many women, and has many illegitimate children as a result. For Marulla, he describes in detail how each illegitimate child looks and from where (that is, from which other man) each one has come. He does not skim over her infidelity, but focusses on it. Where Quirinalis' solution to having children but no wife is to sleep around, Marulla's problem is her blatant and continual adultery.

Telesilla is not much better, at 6.7. She is a legalized adulteress (adultera lege est, 5) because she has had ten husbands in thirty days (3-4). Martial says he is offended less by outright hussies (offendor moecha simpliciore minus, 6). This infidelle, then, is given a more negative rendering in the epigrams. That Martial is offended by her behaviour is a direct contrast with other poems on infidelity.

The wife leaves her husband many times in 6.7 (just above), a motif that appears elsewhere. At 1.62 Laevinia left her husband for a younger man (iuvenem secuta [est] relicto coniuge, 5-6). At 4.9 Dr. Sotas' daughter is debauched because she too has abandoned her husband and run off with another man:

Sotae filia clinici, Labulla,
deserto sequeris Clytū marito
et donas et amas: ἔχεις ἄσώτῳς.

Daughter of Doctor Sotas, Labulla, you leave
your husband to pursue Clytus, you give him
presents and love. You are not like Sotas.¹¹¹

Quite similar to this is 3.70, where Aufidia has left her husband to marry her former lover ("rivalis fuerat qui...ille vir est", 2). Now her ex-husband is her lover (1). Although Martial does not focus especially on the woman who leaves her husband, he does say she is debauched, thus providing another negative glimpse into the

¹¹¹ This is a pun on Dr. Sotas and ἄσώτῳς, which here means 'debauched'. This is the point of the joke. Also, there is a sting when Martial uses Greek: Labulla is no longer a Roman. At any rate, a woman runs off with another man, which is why this poem is included here.

cheating woman.

Another type of infidelle is the wife sleeping with her slave.¹¹² At 7.35 Laecania is obviously having an affair with her slave; she keeps him covered at the baths even though everybody else is naked (1-5). More importantly, she bathes around him rather than staying in the women's quarters (7-8).¹¹³ The same thing happens at 11.75: Caelia reveals her affair by jealously keeping her slave clothed at the baths (1-2). This prevents others from eying her "booty", and possibly trying to make the boy their lover. The words in the last line are positioned cleverly: Caelia is between her servus and his fibula. She is thus involved with her slave. Martial cleverly avoids stating directly that these women are sleeping with their help; yet the reader's impression is that both Laecania and Caelia are unfaithful. Even though they might not be as blatant as Marulla and Telesilla, their discretion fails and their deception is detected.

¹¹² We just noted a master's affair with a female slave. The topic of affairs with slaves has sparked interest over the years. Carcopino holds that the numerous references (in Latin literature in general) to affairs with slaves indicates that there must have been many Roman households where this occurred, and that, as a result, "the abuses of slavery introduced laxity of morals" (102-03). Such now-dated moralizing reveals more about Carcopino's personal stance. Chaney, however, maintains that "the presence of slaves introduced a seriously disturbing element into even legitimate households," and that Martial's references indicate that "the theme would have been less popular if scandals had been rarer" (23-24). Although her reasoning is not dated, it is not very clear; Chaney imposes personal values and judgements as soon as she describes the slave's presence as "disturbing", and she does not strengthen her broad conclusion (regarding frequency of scandals and popularity of affairs) with any evidence. Carcopino and Chaney understood Martial in similar ways, but both are erroneous. Their conclusions must be used with caution. Also on affairs with slaves, see Sullivan (1987) 185, who relates Martial's "criticism" to the subversion of Rome's hierarchical order. Recall Bradley (Slaves and Masters in the Roman Empire) for sexual exploitation interpreted by a more recent value-system; his reviews in Phoenix 40.4 (1986) 478-480, and JRS LXXXI (1991) 192 give useful discussions of his views.

¹¹³ On 7.35, see A.E. Housman's article "Praefanda" Hermes LXVI (1931) 409.

Consenting husband

Some wives do not attempt to deceive their husbands. Rather, their spouses are aware of their adulterous actions. At 10.91 Almo seems aware of his wife's affairs. His house is full of eunuchs (omnes eunuchos, 1), but he himself is impotent (nec arrigit ipse, 1). He complains that his wife has no children (2), but assumes she sleeps with the other men in the house, not remembering, apparently, that these men are infertile.

6.31 is addressed to Charidemus, whose wife is dallying with (literally, "being screwed by") the doctor (uxorem...a medico futui, 1-2). Charidemus knows about this (scis, 1), and, Martial tells, he permits it (sinis, 1). 11.71 is similar; here, though, the husband calls the doctors in to "cure" his wife Leda:

Hystericam vetulo se dixerat esse marito
et queritur futui Leda necesse sibi;
sed flens atque gemens tanti negat esse salutem
seque refert potius proposuisse mori.
vir rogat ut vivat, virides nec deserat annos,
et fieri quod iam non facit ipse sinit.
protinus accedunt medici medicaeque recedunt,
tollunturque pedes. o medicina gravis!

Leda told her old husband that she was hysterical and complains that being screwed is a necessity for her; but with tears and moans and declares that life is not worth the price and says that she has chosen to die instead. Her man begs her to live and not forsake the years of her prime; what he does not any more do himself he allows to be done. Straight away the men doctors approach and the women doctors retire; her feet are hoisted. Drastic therapy!

Leda's husband is essentially consenting to his wife's adultery.

At 11.7 Paula has used every conceivable excuse to get away from her husband, and cheat: Caesar told her to go to various places (3-4), her friend is sick (7), she is hysterical and needs to get away (11-12). Now what does she say, and what will she do (quid ages, 7)? Whenever she feels amorous (literally, "wants to go for a screw") (quotiens placet ire futurum, 13), she tells her husband the truth

(verum mavis dicere...viro! 14). Martial again (see 12.93 above) deems the husband a fool (stupido, 1) for not realizing what his wife was up to; but what is he now (now that he is not only aware, but consenting)? Martial does not tell. The point is that the husband is aware. In this respect, 3.92 is similar: instead of telling the husband, this wife asks Martial if she can take a lover:

Ut patiar moechum rogat uxor, Galle, sed unum.
huic ego non oculos eruo, Galle, duos?

My wife asks me, Gallus, to tolerate a
lover, just one. Shall I not gouge out
both his eyes?

Martial, it seems, is not going to consent to such adulterous behaviour. It is perhaps surprising that his angered reaction is directed at the lover, and not towards his wife. It becomes less surprising when we consider the other poems where the infidelle is not chastized. Instead, Martial calls the (ignorant) husband a fool (12.93 and 11.7). This may be because, as a man, Martial will not tolerate a cheating wife; he who does, is foolish.

What might be more shocking, or perhaps unexpected, is that husbands do sometimes willingly share their wives. See 3.26: Candidus has many items which he alone enjoys -- land (praedia, 1), cash (nummos, 1), a gold plate (aurea, 2), Massic and Caecuban wines (Massica...et...Caecuba, 3), intellect (cor, 4), and talent (ingenium, 4). However, the wife he has he shares with the public ("uxorem sed habes, Candide, cum populo", 6). What greater consent can there be?

Some husbands choose to ignore their wives' affairs; this is a consent of sorts. See 7.10 where Olus ignores (dissimulas, 9) important things, amongst which is a cheating wife (13). He turns a blind eye and does unimportant things which have nothing to do with himself (1-8). We see, then, that in several capacities the husband endures his wife's infidelity. In none of these poems is the

wife at fault; Martial does not focus on blaming her.

Avenging husband

Not all husbands are as patient with their adulteress-wives. At 2.83 the husband has mutilated his wife's lover (foedasti, marite, moechum, 1). His intentions of gaining vengeance and stopping the affair are, unfortunately, in vain (5).¹¹⁴ The same thing happens at 3.85:

Quis tibi persuasit naris abscidere moeche? non hac peccatum est parte, marite, tibi. stulte, quid egisti? nihil hic tua perdidit uxor, cum sit salva tui mentula Deiphobi.	Who persuaded you to cut off the adulterer's nose? No offence against you has been - committed by this part, my good husband. Idiot, what have you done? Your wife has lost no thing here, since your Deiphobus' cock is safe and sound. ¹¹⁵
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Again, in both 2.83 and 3.85, the husband is at fault rather than the cheating wife. In 3.85 Martial calls the man stultus. Martial's verse does not reprehend the wife, nor detail her moral laxity. Furthermore, within the lines the husband focusses his anger upon the lover, not his wife. The wife is completely blame-free.

Affair denied

¹¹⁴ Facial mutilation was a form of punishment for adulterers. It is encompassed within the Latin word irrumatio, from the verb irrumare. Adams informs that irrumatio was an "humiliating and hostile act, but threats to irrumare someone had become something of a joke" – see J.N. Adams, "Martial: 2.83," CPh LXXXVIII (1983) 312. See also Catullus 74, where the more humorous side of irrumatio appears. For discussions and different views on irrumatio, see Sullivan (1979) 288-302; J.N. Adams (1982), esp. 126 & 130; A.S. Cameron, "Martial: 4.17," CPh LXXVIII (1983) 45-46; A.S. Richlin, "The Meaning of irrumare in Catullus and Martial," CPh LXXVI (1981) 40-46. (On 2.83, see Housman 407.)

¹¹⁵ Deiphobus was Priam's son; he made Helen his after his brother Paris died. When captured by the Greeks, he was mutilated and killed by Menelaus. See Shackleton Bailey vol.i, p.265; see also Virgil, Aen. 6.49ff.

We have seen that some wives commit adultery, while their husbands are never aware. In contrast, other wives are suspected of infidelity when they are, in fact, quite faithful. Martial assures Candidus, at 12.38, that he is not to worry (non est quod timeas, 6) about the man who is always by his wife's side, even though he has shiny hair (crine nitens, 3), a tender face (ore tener, 4), a smooth chest (levis pectore, 4) and shaved leg (crure glaber, 4). This man does not screw (non futuit, 6). Any suspicious thoughts of Candidus are flatly denied.

Compare 5.61: although some man is continually around Marianus' wife (uxori semper adhaerat, 1), he is not taking care of her business -- he is taking care of Marianus': "res non uxoris, res agit iste tuas" (14). Martial depicts this man as thoroughly unlikely to be taking care of the wife's business, which is what Marianus suspects (7-8). Martial's point is a little unclear: is the man stealing from Marianus (falsifying business reports?), or is Marianus' "business" his wife? Either way, an affair is denied (Marianus is in denial, or Martial is denying it).

At 10.95 Galla's husband and lover both sent her baby back (1). In this way, each has denied having slept with her (se futuisse negant, 2). Similarly, at 12.26(27), although Saenia says she was screwed by robbers (1), the robbers deny it (negant latrones, 2). Thus in both 10.95 and 12.26 the wife admits (even declares) that she has had an affair; in both, her liaison is denied by the other parties.

As we examine adultery and the female persona in Martial, it appears that whenever the husband is the focus (he has affairs, he cheats, his wife cheats), he is the fool or is stupid either for not noticing or for condoning his wife's affair. He is the butt of Martial's humour. Even so, although Martial focusses on the man's

faults, he is not then denying blame in the woman; rather, he is choosing not to emphasize or highlight it. When in fact he does decide to focus on the woman, negativity arises: Martial describes her actions (or the results of such actions -- children) in detail. He is offended; she is debauched. That is to say, unlike the cheating man, the cheating woman does not carry the point of the humour.

Our examination of the sexual female persona in Martial is not complete. We have seen the woman who wants lots of sex (versus the woman who wants none), the woman who wants to sleep with her husband but cannot, and the woman involved in an affair. What about the woman who has lots of sexual liaisons and gets paid for it: the prostitute?

2.39, for example, links prostitution and adultery:

Coccina famosae donas et ianthina moechae:
vis dare quae meruit munera? mitte togam.

You give scarlet and violet dresses to a notorious adulteress. Would you like to give her a present she has deserved? Send her a gown.

According to the law, togas had to be worn by prostitutes and by adulterous women.¹¹⁶ This is substantiated by 1.35 where Martial asks if anybody allows whores the modesty of the matron's robes: quis...stolatum / permittit meretricibus pudorem (9-10). That is, loose women were not allowed to dress as women of high moral standing. We now examine what Martial has to say concerning the prostitute.

¹¹⁶ See Shackleton Bailey vol.i, p.161. See also Treggiari (1979) 65-73; and Gardner 129, 251-52; and Horace Sat. 1, 2, 63, 82.

The Prostitute

Prostitution was not illegal at Rome during Martial's day. Nonetheless, women who gave sex for money were considered infames. (They were considered immoral, although their collection of money was not, since it was their profession.) Cicero attests to this in his defence of Marcus Caelius Rufus; he portrays his client as naive, vulnerable, and under the influences of a woman whose immorality, shameful actions, and licentious dress proved her to be more of a prostitute than a respectable Roman woman.¹¹⁷ Also, prostitutes were subject to certain legal restrictions, especially under the lex Iulia, which stated that the 'working woman' (meretrix) was forbidden to marry a freeborn citizen; even after she retired, the same law applied.¹¹⁸ Thus, even though prostitution was a legally permitted profession (the women had to register with the aediles, and were even subject to taxes), it was not socially approved, and was certainly considered disreputable.

Some prostitutes worked in brothels, and so their profession was obvious. Other prostitutes, however, were not as easily identified. Some worked in inns and bars as bartenders, or waitresses and were prostitutes as an extra job; others slept with only one man, on a regular basis and for money; still others admitted a handful of selected men into their rooms, and, again, accepted money for their

¹¹⁷ See Cicero Pro Cael. 20.48-49. On prostitution, see also Shelton 53-4; Gardner 131, 221, 250-2; S.B. Pomeroy, Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity, New York: Schocken Books (1975) 201-02; G.R. Scott, A History of Prostitution From Antiquity to the Modern Day, New York: Medical Press of New York (1954); V.L. Bullough, The History of Prostitution, New York: Prometheus Books (1964); H.E. Wedeck, "Synonyms for Meretrix," CW XXXVII (1943-44) 116-17.

¹¹⁸ See Ulpian Epitome 13-14; see also Woman in the Classical World 305, and Gardner 132-34.

sexual favours.¹¹⁹ It seems that discretion was of prime importance, especially to those women who did not work in brothels, or register as prostitutes.

As well as the prostitute's discretion we see -- in the epigrams -- what sorts of prices they charged, and what Martial's "own" experience with them was. Much of the information is "bitty"; part of the examination reflects this with a sort of 'hodgepodge' approach, which is where we begin.

Miscellaneous

From a couple of poems on prostitutes (10.68 and 7.30), the reader might think this institution was unRoman¹²⁰, even though neither poem involves a direct judgement on prostitution. 10.68 deals with propriety for the Roman matrona; within it the matrona, Laelia, talks Greek (1-6). Martial calls her shameful (pro pudor! 6), and says that such language should be heard in the bed of a licentious man (lascivo...viro, 8) and his mistress (8). Laelia can learn Greek language and verse by heart (11), but she will never be a Lais (non tamen omnino...Lais erit, 12) -- that is, a prostitute. Speaking Greek is not for Roman matronae.

Epigram 7.30 deals with a censure of variety in lovers. Lesbia, a Roman girl, grants sexual favours to all sorts: to Parthians (Parthis, 1), Germans (Germanis, 1),

¹¹⁹ Gardner 132-33

¹²⁰ By "unRoman" I mean "considered improper by Romans," or rather "neither typical nor expected of Romans." For comparison, see Juvenal 6.184-96; Roman women gain self-confidence when they have mastered the Greek language -- they then utter inappropriate phrases in public (phrases better kept in the bedroom). In Martial, recall 4.9, where Labulla is called debauched due to her moral laxity. Martial uses Greek to describe her, perhaps because her actions were unRoman (so she can no longer be recognized as Roman -- i.e. she is now addressed in Greek). (Alternatively, she may have been of immigrant or slave stock rather than a native-born Roman; Martial, then, addresses her in Greek.)

and Dacians (Dacis, 1), to Cilicians (Cilicum, 2), Cappadocians (Cappadocum, 2), the man from Memphis (Memphiticus, 3), and to Indians (Indus, 4), not to mention to Jews (Iudaeorum, 5) and to an Alan – some knight from Sarmatia (Sarmatico...Alanus equo, 6). Curiously, however, she never grants favours to a Roman (8). This cannot be because she is selective – Martial has just listed all the different types she has had. The impression is that she does not choose Roman men because her practice is unRoman, even shameful to Roman citizens. However, there is no more evidence that prostitution is unRoman; these two poems are unique in providing such an impression.

Although mentioned earlier, we note again that "Martial was not much in the habit of creating personalities, people who crop up repeatedly under the same name with similar characteristics."¹²¹ In fact, says Shackleton Bailey, "To track...Galla through [her] numerous manifestations would be a waste of time."¹²² While this may be so, it is striking that out of a total of sixteen appearances, Galla is a prostitute in seven poems. At 3.90 Galla both wants, and does not want, to oblige Martial ("vult non vult dare Galla mihi," 1). At 4.38 Galla says no (neqa, 1); hopefully she won't say no for too long (noli nimium...negare diu, 2). 7.18 is graphic, though quite brutally amusing: it concerns noises coming from Galla during sex. We have seen 10.75, where she eventually offers to pay, having lowered her prices and even said she would do it for free.

On the contrary, at 3.54, since Martial cannot give the price Galla demands, ("cum dare non possim quod poscis", 1), it would be simpler if she would just say

¹²¹ Shackleton Bailey, vol.iii, p.324

¹²² vol.iii, p.325

no (2). At 9.4 we see that Galla can be done for two gold pieces (1). Why then does she take ten from Aeschylus? To keep her quiet (2). Finally, her appearance at 2.25 is probably as a prostitute: Galla never gives but always promises (1). Since she always deceives, Martial asks (rogo, 2) her -- once again -- just to say no (nega, 2). Therefore, even though Galla has no consistently identifiable character traits, it seems likely -- or at least probable -- that the persona Martial has chosen for Galla is as a prostitute.

Discretion

A prostitute's discretion, we noted, was important in Roman society during Martial's day. Within the epigrams, this issue appears. At 1.34 we see that prostitutes are very discreet, especially when compared to Lesbia, a girl who flaunts her sexual liaisons:

Incustoditis et apertis, Lesbia, semper
 liminibus peccas nec tua furta tegis,
 et plus spectator quam te delectat adulter
 nec sunt grata tibi gaudia si qua latent.
 at meretrix abigit testem veloque seraque
 raraque Summemmi fornice rima patet.
 a Chione saltem vel ab lade disce pudorem:
 abscondunt spurcas et monumenta lupas.
 numquid dura tibi nimium censura videtur?
 deprendi veto te, Lesbia, non futui.

Lesbia, when you turn your tricks¹²³,
 you don't hide them; the doors are always
 open and unguarded. A spectator gives you
 more pleasure than a lover and you have no
 use for joys concealed. A prostitute, on the
 other hand, drives witnesses away with
 curtain and bolt and rarely does a chink gape
 in Summemmius' brothel. Learn modesty
 from Chione or las, if from nobody else.
 Even dirty whores take cover in tombs. Do
 you find my strictures too harsh? I am not
 telling you not to get screwed, Lesbia, only
 not to get caught.

¹²³ peccas nec tua furta tegis is literally "you sin but you do not hide your tricks/deceits." There is no textual support or allusion to Lesbia as a "trick-turning" prostitute; Shackleton Bailey's translation might then be rejected. All the same, the poem is relevant because Lesbia, who flaunts her sexual escapades, directly contrasts with the prostitute, who hides hers.

The female persona who is blatant about her affairs is, it seems, contrary to the norm, at least to Martial's expectations within his verse.

Not only prostitutes are expected to be discreet. At 4.12 we see another woman whose flaunted sexual actions are frowned upon. Here, Thais (who is not characterized as a prostitute) is hardly discreet: she refuses nobody (nulli...negas, 1), and if this does not shame her, then she should at least be ashamed that she refuses nothing (negare nihil, 2). In 12.79 Martial says that whoever refuses nothing is a sucker (quisquis nil negat...fellat, 4). Thais, then, is a sucker. This, though, is not stated at 4.12 so we simply read that Thais should be ashamed for not denying -- or at least not keeping quiet about -- her sexual escapades. Therefore, discretion of the female persona (in general, not simply of the prostitute) is important.

Martial's "own" experience

"Own" is between quotation marks because as soon as we try to identify the real man's real feelings or experiences, the problem of the level of reality within the epigrams rears its head. The point of examining poems on Martial's "experiences" with prostitutes is not to learn about the poet or his psyche, his personal needs or desires; we examine the relevant poems because they are written in the first person; this is what they have in common. The reader's impression is that the poems are more real (and therefore more identifiable); whether they are or not is unimportant.

Martial relates "his" affairs with a prostitute at 2.31. He has enjoyed the favours of (literally, has "done") Chrestina often (saepe ego Chrestinam futui, 1); she grants favours very well (1-2). At 4.50 we see that Martial has been with Thais

as well:

Quid me, Thai, senem subinde dicis?
nemo est, Thai, senex ad irrumandum.

Why do you keep calling me an old
man, Thais? Nobody is an old man,
Thais, when it comes to giving suck.

Thais is the *fellatrix*. This poem contrasts with 2.31: Martial does not reveal whether he enjoys Thais' favours or not. Similarly, he reveals no particular pleasure with Lydia either, in 11.21. If anything, he regrets that he has had some sort of sexual experience with her. Although graphic, and quite brutal, this poem is funny:

Lydia tam laxa est equitis quam culus aeni,
quam celer arguto qui sonat aere trochus,
quam rota transmisso totiens intacta petauro,
quam vetus a crassa calceus udus aqua,
quam quae rara vagos expectant retia turdos,
quam Pompeiano vela negata Noto,
quam quae de pthisico lapsa est armilla cinaedo,
culcita Leuconico quam viduata suo,
quam veteres braciae Brittonis pauperis, et quam
turpe Ravennatis guttur onocrotali.
hanc in piscina dicor futuisse marina.
nescio; piscinam me futuisse puto.

Lydia is as spacious as the arse of a
brazen horseman, as a swift hoop,
noisy with its clattering bronze, as the
wheel through which the acrobat
often leaps without touching it, as an
old shoe soaked in muddy water, as
the wide-meshed nets that wait for
stray thrushes, as the awnings
denied by the South Wind in
Pompey's theatre, as an armlet that
slipped from a consumptive catamite,
as a mattress divorced from its
Leuconian stuffing, as the old
breeches of a pauper Briton, and as
the ugly throat of a pelican of
Ravenna. I am said to have screwed
her in a marine fishpond. I don't
know; I think I screwed the
fishpond.¹²⁴

Even though we noted the importance of not trying to locate Martial's real-life feelings about his experiences with prostitutes, upon inspection, we see that he

¹²⁴ Notice all the repetitions within this poem: along with other appearances, *quam* starts several consecutive lines; also of note are the repeated *piscina* and *futuisse* in lines 11 and 12. The numerous uses of *quam* may be to exaggerate the list-like effect of the verse, to emphasize all the abhorrent aspects of this persona. He may have repeated *futuisse* for shock value. Perhaps Martial wanted this one in particular to stick in his readers' minds.

does not, in fact, reveal much anyway. At most, he likes Chrestina's favours (though we do not know what they are), he has no opinion about Thais, and he is not even sure if he has even been with Lydia (he has heard about her though). Other of Martial's experiences concern the prices charged, and are included below.

Prices

Recall 3.54 and 9.4 where the prostitute's price is sometimes too high.¹²⁵ This is also the case at 2.63: Milichus pays a hundred thousand sesterces to sleep with Leda, a girl he picked up at the Sacred Way (1-2). Martial tells Milichus that this is extravagant (luxuria est, 3 and 4).

In contrast, prostitutes sometimes charge a very affordable price. This is the case at 11.29. Although the price charged is not the point of the poem, we note nonetheless that Martial can obviously afford Phyllis -- he is with her and is advising how she might be more alluring. Also, recall Galla (in 10.75 above), who reduces her fee to the point of offering her services for free. A woman who performs for free usually falls outside the definition of a "prostitute." Yet the female persona in Martial's epigrams who does give herself for free -- like Galla in 10.75 -- would normally charge for her favours. It is only under special circumstances (desperation, for example) that she does not charge. She is still defined as a prostitute. Martial expects prostitutes to charge something. At 12.55 he says that girls should not give favours for nothing: gratis ne date (3). In fact, anyone who

¹²⁵ On prices, see R.P. Duncan-Smith, The Economy of the Roman Empire, New York: Cambridge University Press (1982) 246; T.A. McGinn, "The Taxation of Roman Prostitutes," Helios 16.1 (1989) 79-110; and S. Treggiari (1979) 73.

tells them to give for nothing is an "impudent jackass" ("gratis qui dare vos iubet, puellae, / insulsissimus improbissimusque est", 1-2). Thus, when prostitutes do give free favours, such incidents are isolated, and do not free the persona from her definition as a meretrix.

From an exploration of Martial's epigrams on prostitutes we notice that he is never especially negative concerning this persona's choice of lifestyle. As presumably with real-life Roman prostitutes, Martial's "working" women are discreet (with one or two exceptions). Poems in the first person are revealing neither about attitudes to prostitution nor about the poet's true self. Prices charged vary, but are expected; only once or twice will this persona not charge.

The Lesbian

One other sexual woman-type remains: the lesbian. Little seems to be known about female homosexuality at Rome; girls were married so young that they had no real opportunity for pre-marital same-sex affairs. Adult lesbianism is known to have existed, but only through rare textual allusions where the relationship is described in "so veiled or unclear a way as to make the whole question especially difficult."¹²⁶ It is useful to see what Martial has to say about this female persona.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Women in the Classical World 300; see also 325. For primary references, see Seneca Controv. 1.2.23; Ovid Metam. 9.666-791; Juvenal's Sat. 6. Secondary sources include S. Lilja, Homosexuality in Republican and Augustan Rome, Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica (1983); H.D. Jocelyn, "Latin Sexual Humour," CV 29.4 (1985) 13-14; J.P. Hallett, "Female Homoeroticism and the Denial of Roman Reality in Latin Literature," YJC 3.1 (1989) 209-27; A. Richlin, The Garden of Priapus: Sexuality and Aggression in Roman Humor, London: Oxford University Press (1992).

¹²⁷ Sullivan says that the lesbian in Martial's verses shows complete and blatant "disregard for social convention" as she upsets and violates the Roman mos maiorum

There are, in fact, only four poems in Martial where the lesbian appears. This is noticeably less than the other sexual woman-types. Further, one of the four poems is not a direct reference to this persona; rather, it plants the thought of lesbianism, but then dismisses it. This is poem 3.84. Martial mentions the wife's female lover (moecha, 1) only to say he is not talking about a girl (non puellam / dixi, 1-2), but about Gongylion's tongue (linguam, 2). Linguam is the last word in the poem; moecha is feminine because lingua is.¹²⁸ Martial suspends the truth of the situation: since moecha appears alone, the reader -- if only for a moment -- might think moecha is substantive (referring to a woman).

Direct references to the lesbian appear at 1.90, 7.67, and 7.70. At 1.90 Martial observes how Bassa seems chaste (a Lucretia, 6) because she is never around men (1), because she is not rumoured to have a lover (2), and because she is continually surrounded by women (3). Bassa is not as she seems. To the contrary, her love is monstrous or freakish (prodigiosus, 6) as she assumes the male role of fornicator, or screwer (fututor, 6-8). Many of the sexual female personae in the epigrams have met with little negativity in their representations. Here, though, the lesbian's depiction lacks anything positive. Martial's ultimate insult to her is in his denial of this woman's femininity.¹²⁹

(1979, 299). Regarding their sexual ethics, he says that "Martial implies that women are willing to stop at nothing in this behaviour because they are fundamentally without taste or intellectual capacities" (1991, 201); this reveals more about Sullivan than Martial.

¹²⁸ In discussion with Professor Kavanagh at Queen's, the suggestion arose that moecha is, in fact, in apposition to lingua, not feminine because of it; moecha is "The Tongue".

¹²⁹ Compare Juvenal: many women in the sixth satire assume more masculine roles: as business woman (398-401), as litigator (242-45), intellectual (434-40), or athlete (246-64).

This happens again at 7.67. Philaenis the lesbian (tribas Philaenis, 1) is athletic and unfeminine (1-8). Worse, when it comes to sex she does not suck (she thinks it is not virile enough, 14), but devours girls (15). This, though, is far from virile, says Martial (17). It seems that Philaenis denies herself any femininity. That is, it is not an insult by Martial (in contrast to 1.90). The lesbian strives to be masculine. In this way we do not sense that she is trying to deceive anybody regarding her sexuality.

7.70 strengthens this idea. Here Philaenis (again) -- the lesbian of lesbians (tribadum tribas, 1) -- calls those she screws "girlfriends" (quam futuis vocas amicam, 2). Futuis is, we have noted, the verb depicting the male sexual role. Philaenis actively seeks masculinity. Note here the double meaning of amica: female friend and/or mistress. Philaenis calls her girl-friends girlfriends. Again, she does not attempt to hide her sexual preference.

These are all the poems on lesbianism. Apart from 1.90 we note no particular negativity associated with this final sexual female persona. We do note that the same-sex oriented woman is undeniably unfeminine, both in her sexual lifestyle and in her daily pursuits (eating, sports). This, at least, is what Martial chooses to reveal.

Regarding the sexual female persona in Martial's epigrams, we see that the issue of discretion appears quite often. Some adulteresses are blatant while others attempt to deceive their husbands; prostitutes are mostly discreet, while there is no evidence that lesbians try to hide their orientation (they never have men around, and even call their girl-friends lovers). Martial includes various levels of discretion along with varying sexual woman-types.

None of the four sexual types is portrayed in an especially negative way; exceptions are the wife too eager to please her husband (because she neglects her familial duty), the blatant infidelle, and Bassa the lesbian (in 1.90). Having observed that, none of them is given a particularly positive representation either; exceptions here include the easy woman and the *fellatrix*. Due to the absence of any especially strong view of the sexual woman, we have the impression that Martial includes her because of the high level of interest (perhaps demand) of his readers.¹³⁰

Our exploration and examination of the different female personae in Martial's epigrams is essentially complete. What remains -- before summing up observations in the concluding chapter -- is to note Martial's "own" choice of women.

The Poet's Choice

Once again the problem of determining the level of reality within the epigrams arises. Does Martial reveal personal taste? If so, is he genuine? Or does he represent a supposed male collective norm? It is impossible to determine, although it seems unlikely that he is showing any personal truth. Thus, as we observe poems where the poetic persona states his choice, or particular preferences of woman-types, we must do so with caution. It is important not to

¹³⁰ This might explain why the eleventh book is more racy than the others: it was composed later, and may have been the result of Martial's attempts to meet the high demands of his readers for more raunchy material.

believe we can ever locate Martial's true choice, even when it seems to coincide with other extant observations and literary evidence.

We see women whom "Martial" both wants and does not want. We see both *named* women and general woman-types.¹³¹ Most of these poems have been seen already; it is interesting to gather together those women of Martial's choice.

Named

Just because a woman is named, the level of reality (or lack of thereof) is not necessarily altered. There is only one named woman whom Martial claims to **want**. She is Claudia, at 5.78, and is Martial's choice at a meagre dinner. We note that Claudia is not the subject of this poem. Rather she is briefly referred to at line 31; even then, Martial does not state that he chooses her, but includes her in his seating plan thus implying that she will be there with him.

Martial does also mention wanting Glycera at 6.40:

Femina praeferrī potuit tibi nulla, Lycori:
praeferrī Glycerae femina nulla potest.
haec erit hoc quod tu: tu non potes esse quod haec est.
tempora quid faciunt! hanc volo, te volui.

No woman *could* be preferred to you, Lycoris; no woman *can* be preferred to Glycera. She will be what you are. You cannot be what she is. Such is the power of time. I want her, I wanted you.

Since he used to want Lycoris, but no longer does, the reader's impression is that Glycera will also be of short-lived desirability. Over time Martial will want another, and Glycera will be set aside.

¹³¹ There is some overlap; for example, some women are named, but not wanted for general reasons (10.8 & 11.19).

Martial **does not want** Lycoris. Other unwanted, named woman appear -- more than wanted females. Recall Philaenis of 2.33 who is unwanted because she is bald, rubicund, and one-eyed. Remember Telesina in 2.49: she is a tramp so Martial does not want her. He wants no part of Chloe either, at 3.53:

Et vultu poteram tuo carere
 et collo manibusque cruribusque
 et mammis natibusque clunibusque,
 et, ne singula persequi laborem,
 tota te poteram, Chloe, carere.

I could do without your face
 and neck and hands and legs
 and breasts and buttocks and
 hips and (not to be at the
 trouble of going through
 particulars) I could do without
 you, Chloe, in your entirety.

Paula is not marriage material (10.81) because she is too old. And Martial will go to great lengths to avoid kissing Philaenis, in 10.22.

In book XI Galla is not the one for Martial because she is too literate (11.19). Sila is hardly right for him because of the numerous conditions for their being together (11.23), and even though Martial can do it four times in a night, there is no way he could have relations with Telesilla once in four years (11.97):

Una nocte quater possum: sed quattuor annis
 si possum, peream, te, Telesilla, semel.

I can manage it four times in a night.
 But confound me if I can manage
 you, Telesilla, once in four years.

These are the named women who appear in poems where Martial states different tastes and preferences, or dislikes.

General

Physically, Martial **wants** a woman who is neither a skinny waif (habere amicam nolo...subtilem, 11.100.1) nor one who weighs a thousand pounds (amicam, nolo mille librarum, 5). Ideally, a Lesbia or a Cynthia -- that is, a girl as

poetic inspiration -- is needed (8.73).

On the moral plane, we should recall that Martial says he wants a girl who is neither too easy nor too hard-to-get at 1.57. Such thinking is seen in 2.49: Telesina's "loose" tendencies are Martial's reasons for not wanting her. Yet 9.32 contrasts; here, Martial wants an easy girl (hanc volo quae facilis, 1). Three other poems agree: 9.67 (Martial's wanton girl is described as pura), 9.40 (Martial shows that the fellatrix is eagerly sought), and 11.104 (Martial wants not a straight-laced girl, but one who will join him -- naked -- and make love by lamplight).

In contrast, the poet **does not want** a woman who is overly educated; recall 2.90. 11.19 (supra) agrees.¹³² Nor is a rich woman the right type for him (8.12). 3.32 shows that old women are anything but right for Martial: he cannot sleep with them. Recall 10.8 where Martial does not want to marry Paula on account of her advanced years.

In sum, the poet's choice goes to "Plain Jane" next door, for she is a regular girl, both physically and morally; she has no attributes about which one might comment. Extreme is bad, for Martial avoids the woman who is abundantly wealthy, old, educated, fat, or thin.

¹³² Again, on the educated Roman woman, see Glazebrook's thesis.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

Many scholars have examined Martial's epigrams, and attempted to determine the poet's true biography and sentiment. Some have extended their findings, and applied them to contemporary Roman male society in general. Comparatively little, however, has been written on the actual content of Martial's text. Howell's commentary on Book i, and Kay's on Book xi, are particularly helpful; but there are twelve other books still needing an in-depth (con)textual analysis.

Many scholars, too, have studied the Roman woman, and reached conclusions from her numerous representations -- in art, history, tragedy, comedy, epic, poetry, and so on. Such a topic, though, is so vast and so pervasively attested that to incorporate any detailed analysis of any individual's text would be problematic, not to mention dauntingly demanding.

An interest in both Martial's art, and the therein represented woman of Rome led to this inquiry into the female persona as she is seen within the epigrams. Tabulated statistics provided a starting point, and showed that Book xi has the highest percentage of poems on women, while Book xiii has the lowest. Of all the types of women appearing throughout, the sexual woman receives most attention and lines. Yet numbers and percentages are limited in that they elucidate nothing in terms of the poet's use, the poem's meaning, nor the persona's setting; that is, they lack context. Thus, the following chapters set the various types of female personae in context. Through contrast, comparison, and textual analysis, it became possible to establish certain general observations and deductions concerning most of the women-types.

Martial does not seem to limit who reads his epigrams, but he does specify which poems are appropriate for which people; some are designed with the matrona in mind, while others ought not to be read by any female, no matter how "easy" she may be.

Many personae are superficially chaste, but "truly" unchaste, as Martial reveals. He claims to have detected their true selves. At points, Martial deceives the reader's expectations by making a woman -- who is known for her chastity -- an avid reader of licentiousness; such is the case with Lucretia. The woman of genuine virtue does appear, but Martial fleets past her; in contrast, he makes the unchaste woman more of a focus.

Within the epigrams physical and characteristic beauty and ugliness are not mutually exclusive. Some women either portray or perceive themselves as the opposite of what they really are. Again, Martial detects their "true" nature, or appearance. He sees through the ugly woman's deception when he detects her attempts to hide or improve her unattractive physical appearance. The truly beautiful woman appears, but her beauty is more a quality of character than a visual endowment. Martial focusses on (catching) a persona's blemishes and vain attempts at concealment rather than on any positive physical attributes.

We see the old woman throughout. Roughly 70% of her appearances pertain to her sexual (un)desirability. It is perhaps surprising that the randy, old persona is not always rejected. We note, though, that when she is desirable, it is for some reason other than just as herself; mostly it is because she has money.

The woman of wealth (not simply the old woman) appears, but briefly and never as the focal point of the poem. Her male counterpart, however, appears often, mostly as the focus of his poem. The rich woman -- as wife, mistress,

daughter, or slave -- is often the victim of a greedy man. Money usually means power, yet the only powerful woman we see is the wife; and then, two thirds of her appearances show her superior financial position as negative (she is masculine, and is proving her husband to be feminine).

In general, Martial provides a real mixture of married women. There are serious and light poems. We see the wife as mourning or being mourned, and as killing her spouse or being killed by him; sometimes she is devoted, but sometimes her husband is. Mostly we observe the wife as mourning the loss of her husband, being genuinely devoted to her husband, yet being killed or wished dead by him!

The sexually potent woman, the adulteress, the prostitute, and the lesbian are all encompassed within the broader category of the sexual female persona. Concerning the lusty woman, it seems that a woman who is neither too prim nor overly easy is ideal. Martial is not especially negative when it comes to the sexually potent woman, even when she neglects her familial duty in a quest for more sex. The woman who is too eager, though, is not good. There are many lusty personae, and many reactions to them.

Regarding adultery, no especial negativity is associated with the mistress; her inclusion within this category may be debated. Some poems on the cheating wife focus on the husband, others on the wife. When the husband is the focal point, he is the fool for not noticing (Martial does), or for condoning his wife's affair. When Martial focusses on the wife, negativity arises: he is offended, and she is debauched. That is to say, the adulterous woman does not, as her male counterpart does, carry the focus of Martial's humour.

With the prostitute, discretion is of prime importance. This extends to women in general. Apart from chastizing this "working woman's" indiscretion when

it arises, Martial is never negative about her choice of lifestyle. Prices charged vary, but are expected. Poems in the first person are revealing neither about attitudes to prostitution, nor about the poet's true self.

Again, with the lesbian, there is no particular negativity concerning her sexual lifestyle. We note the small number of poems on this persona. Despite this, she is given an undeniably masculine role -- in her sexual and daily pursuits. There is no evidence that the lesbian tries to hide her true orientation.

Apart from one or two exceptions, poems on the sexual personae are not especially negative; nor are they especially positive. Because of this, and the absence of any particularly strong views, we suspect that Martial included her as a result of a high level of interest or demand from his readers.

Finally, the "Poet's Choice Award" goes to "Plain Jane", who encompasses no extremes: she is not too thin, nor too fat; she is not excessively rich, old, or educated. Even though we can select a recipient, we must always be aware of the problem of the level of reality in the epigrams; we must not believe that this is really Martial's own choice, because we cannot ever really know how, what or why he truly felt. Marcel Duchamp rightly observes:

I love the word "believe". In general,
when one says, "I know," one does not
know: one believes.

Marcel Duchamp, Duchamp du signe
(Paris: Flammarion, 1975, p.185)

A reader's general impression concerning the epigrams which reveal the female persona, would probably be that Martial's eye is forever observing, or rather detecting, then revealing the woman's attempts to hide her "true" nature,

appearance, or actions. It is also apparent that, contrary to many critical opinions and expectations, this poet does not depict his females in an especially negative -- "misogynistic" -- way. In fact, he often acknowledges and describes women of genuine devotion and beauty, who deserve serious praise; in addition, males often become the target. At the same time, though, he is not altogether lacking in criticism of certain female types; but even in these instances, his tone is mostly lighter, often satirical.

In terms of wider application of these observations, it would be interesting to discover whether or not Martial's approach towards his female personae extends to their male counterparts; or towards the mythical and immortal female figures, such as the Muses. Does he treat them in the same manner? Does he attribute similar vocabulary to them?

Another aspect which calls for further interest and examination is the topic of the level of reality within the epigrams. Are named figures and events ever real? If so, which ones, and how can we tell? Names given to various personae might be a clue to help locate the right level. Some names were clearly taken from other authors: Lycoris from Horace; Glycera from Tibullus; and so on. We have also observed that some names, for both males and females, had literal meanings which were appropriate to their depiction: there was Aper ("wild beast") who brutally stabbed his wife; Labulla ("little lips") who stole kisses from her slave; Chione ("snow white") and Phlogis ("fiery") who were frigid and easy respectively; Fescennia ("the Fescennine woman") whose breath reeked of alcohol; Vetustilla ("little old woman") whose aged body was the target of Martial's derision; Eulogos ("good speaker") the auctioneer; and so on. Investigation into names might establish some helpful guidelines for pin-pointing (un)reality within Martial's

epigrams.

It would also be interesting to examine and analyse other Latin authors to see if Martial's style and approach influenced -- or was influenced by -- other contemporary writers. A promising start has been made in Colton's pioneering work, Juvenal's Use of Martial's Epigrams (1991). Certainly Juvenal adopted much of Martial's tone, style, and art in general. In his sixth satire especially we notice many of the same women-types appearing: the adulteress, the prostitute, the masculine woman, the neglectful wife, the vain woman, the Blue Stocking, and so on. But it will be useful to see if Juvenal's language and poetical content was derived from Martial's; and if so, does this help us understand Juvenal better or not?

Through content analysis, as well as comparison and contrast of similarly themed poems, this thesis has explored the female personae in Martial's epigrams. We have been able to observe and identify certain shared traits and representations in some types, which in turn lead to more general observations about one persona or another. At the same time, this thesis has opened up several areas of potential interest, which deserve further examination and research. Therefore, although much critical work has been accomplished on Martial and his poetry, further avenues of promising research into this timelessly appealing author beckon.

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